

April 2, 1888.]

Evangelical Christendom.

APRIL, 1888.

MONTHLY NOTES.

Our present issue is very materially enlarged, so as to enable us to lay before our readers some of the admirable addresses given at the special meetings for Testimony on the Fundamental Truths of the Gospel, arranged by the Evangelical Alliance. The exceptional importance of the movement demanded such a step, and we hope in our next issue to continue the report of the meetings.

There is much reason to be thankful for the success which has, so far, attended the meetings which have been held in London for testimony to fundamental truth. No one could have been present at the opening meeting at Exeter Hall without being struck by the unusual number of men present, and by the deep interest shown in the subjects which were successively handled by such able speakers as Canon Girdlestone, Mr. Spurgeon, and Canon Fleming. Mr. Spurgeon's address, as might be expected, called forth unwonted enthusiasm. One interesting feature of the addresses was that almost all the speakers referred to the hopes which such a meeting was calculated to excite as to a closer drawing together of Christians interested in maintaining fundamental truth, and the hearty response with which such a thought was greeted showed that it went to the hearts of those present. The afternoon meeting of the same day was deeply spiritual in its tone, owing, no doubt, to the prominence given to prayer, and from the subject chosen—"The Person and Work of the Holy Ghost." Mr. Moule's address in the evening, on "Christ the Righteousness of the Believer," will well repay careful study. The weather sadly interfered with the attendance, but the report of the evening addresses will be read with the more interest by those unable to be present. Mr. Jenkins' and Dr. McEwan's addresses deserved a larger auditory. The meetings at Kensington Town Hall, at Mildmay Conference Hall, and at the Great Assembly Hall, Mile End, were well attended, considering the very inclement weather which prevailed. The spirit at all the meetings left nothing to be desired. Special united prayer had for some weeks previous to the meetings been made that, under the Holy Spirit's guidance, the proceedings throughout might exhibit the spirit of union and brotherly love; all will testify that in an eminent degree the Lord graciously answered these prayers. The Special Committee appointed to make the arrangements, realizing how graciously prayer was answered in blessing from God, met, with other brethren, on March 29th, at the Alliance House, to offer praise and thanksgiving.

The all-absorbing event of last month has been the death of the great and good German Emperor. Although at his patriarchal age his removal from amongst his

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people could not be unexpected, yet it almost came as a surprise at the last, so healthy and vigorous had his life till very lately been, and so much of late had the thoughts of all been diverted from him to his suffering son. His peaceful end in the bosom of his family, so busy to the last in work for his people that he had "no time to be tired," will long be thought of by his attached subjects as a fitting close to a great reign. His appreciation of the passages of Holy Scripture which were read to him on his death-bed presents a sight edifying to the Christian, and one, we may hope, not without instruction to the world, as showing the only real source of consolation at such a time. It is refreshing to exchange the record that in Roman Catholic countries is so often annexed to announcements of death, "fortified by the rites of the Church," for one that might be expressed in similar terms as "fortified by the promises of God's Word." Such expressions as "that is beautiful," "that is right," are of real value to the survivors as evidences of the mind having been strengthened at the last to meet the approach of death, and we know that while "the rites of the Church" are but a broken reed to lean upon, the word of God is a staff which cannot fail. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me."

Amidst all the funeral pomp and pageantry at the Cathedral in Berlin, the absence of three such leading men as the present Emperor, Prince Bismarck, and Count Moltke, speaks a lesson of solemn warning as to the frailty of everything human. The illness which prevented one, and the fatigue which kept the other two from taking part in the last ceremonial, show how little may set aside the most trusted human props and stays, and that at a time when they seem most to be needed. It is well, however, if Christians be thereby stirred up to pray for a prolongation of the life of the present Emperor and of his councillors, seeing that, humanly speaking, the continuation of the policy of peace which has hitherto characterised the great German Empire so much depends upon them.

Members of the Evangelical Alliance will rejoice to note, in the declaration of policy by the present Emperor, that the continuance of "religious liberty" was specially emphasized. With the Church of Rome straining every nerve to reimpose her cruel despotism upon mankind, it is encouraging to see the greatest power in Europe still faithful to the great principle of the Reformation, once so faithfully maintained by Luther at the Diet of Worms, and enunciated by him in a letter to the Emperor Charles v., written a few days after, in these words: "God, who is searcher of hearts, is my witness that I am ready most earnestly to obey your Majesty, in honour or dishonour, in life or in death, and with no exception save the word of God by which man lives. But when eternal interests are concerned, God wills not that man should submit unto man, for such submission in spiritual matters is a real worship, and ought to be rendered solely to the Creator."

Our contemporary, *The Christian*, finds fault with the Basis of the Evangelical Alliance because it is accepted by some who attach their own meaning to its language, which meaning may differ from that which others give to the same words. Thus persons holding different views on the subject of Baptism and the Christian ministry accept that article in the Basis which deals with these subjects, whilst confessedly differing as to the meaning they attach to this article. To take, for instance, Baptism. The article recognises "the obligation and perpetuity" of this ordinance, and, having done so, leaves individual consciences free to judge for them-

selves what they mean by the ordinance of Baptism. This is surely what was intended, and rightly intended, by those who drew up the Basis. It would have been easy for the founders of the Alliance to have drawn up a definition of Baptism framed purposely to exclude those who did not accept their particular view of it, whatever it might have been, whether Infant Baptism or Believers' Baptism, or whether administered by sprinkling or by immersion. But this would have been the very opposite of what they aimed at. Their object was to unite Christians, not to separate them. They were not drawing up a church confession with the view of defining how Baptism should be understood, but were endeavouring to unite upon a common evangelical basis members of churches which take different views upon this subject. The form of language used was therefore intentional, and it is hard to see how it could have been otherwise.

So far from this being a reproach, it is what the Evangelical Alliance may well be proud of. The very evils which the Alliance seeks to combat, the "unhappy divisions" amongst Christians, have mostly arisen from too rigid definitions on points which had far better have been left open. The 14th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans is one that throws much light upon this subject. We are there forbidden to sit in judgment upon our brethren as to points on which we may differ from them, though each believes himself to be in possession of his Lord's mind on the subject so far as his own action is concerned. Nay, so strongly is independence of individual conscience thus to be maintained that although all Christians actually serve one and the same Master, the case is put as if each served a different master: "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth."

But it may be objected that this refers only to questions of the observance or non-observance of days, and of eating or not eating of meats. Nevertheless, it involves a principle which is equally applicable to Christians in other matters in which they differ as to their Master's directions. That Christ's commands should be observed no Christian can dispute. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" makes that clear. Hence, as Christian ministry and sacraments have surely been instituted in some form or other (as many passages of Scripture testify), such institution by Christ calls for recognition on the part of His servants, and intelligent recognition so far as our own conduct is concerned; but to ride rough-shod over the conscientious convictions of brethren who differ from us as to what the Master meant is just what Rom. xiv. so emphatically forbids. Hence the Basis of the Evangelical Alliance leaves these points on which Christian consciences differ, open questions, and we must be content to recognize the Master's appointment in language that purposely admits of different interpretations. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind: he that regardeth the day regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it." To this it may perhaps be replied: If this latitude of interpretation be conceded, does it not equally affect such statements of doctrine as are contained in the Basis, and can such an assent to the Basis be worth anything? The answer to this is: Points left open by the Basis must not be confounded with others that are not so. The distinction between matters essential and non-essential is here of much importance. The Deity of Christ, the "utter depravity of human nature in consequence of the fall," Christ's "work of atonement for sinners of mankind," cannot be treated as points unessential. A certain latitude of interpretation may be freely conceded, but as to the truths themselves, all members

of the Alliance "hold and maintain what are usually understood to be Evangelical views in regard to the matters of doctrine" stated in the Basis. If it were not so, the Evangelical Alliance would have no ground for undertaking the movement in which they are now engaged for testimony to Fundamental Truth. It is because they are united on a basis which recognizes such truths that they are able to summon Christians to the defence of Fundamental Truth, however they may differ from one another on non-essential points.

LET GOD BE TRUE.

Many do not think it, many Christians do not think it, nevertheless it is a fact that all that God asks of us is to let Him be true, and that all His controversy with us is that we will not let Him be true. To let God be true is faith, and the highest faith is just the recognition of His perfect truth. The beloved Apostle says, "He that believeth not God hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the testimony that God has given to his Son." God offers us life in Christ, and life includes pardon for sin, deliverance from our self-nature, which is sinward, reconciliation with Himself, promises, heirship, blessedness; to accept of these, to claim, to appropriate these, is to let God be true. A woman was carrying herrings through a street at the East-end of London; a gentleman paid her the price of what was in her basket, and told her to take them and go through the street offering them for nothing. People looked and laughed, but nobody took; they showed that they did not believe her. And so when people hear the Gospel faithfully preached, hear the glad tidings of life, pardon, peace, happiness in Christ, they let it alone, and thus show plainly that they do not credit God with being true. Until men accept the Gospel they make God a liar; they show they do not believe it to be glad tidings. They are persuaded that there is something to pay that they cannot afford to pay; they have to renounce freedom, joy, comfort, honour, and they do not believe that they will be compensated for the loss of these. God says, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which profiteth not, and your labour for that which satisfieth not," and they think it is the voice of a merchant trying to persuade them to buy his inferior and costly goods. What is this but unbelief? Buy of me gold tried in the fire, He says; and the only price is that you should give up your false money that is without the King's image and superscription, and that perishes with the using; yet you hold on tenaciously to your false coin, showing that you do not believe Christ. "Come,

follow me," He says; "I am mightier than all that may oppose you." Surely, if you believed this, you would cast in your lot with Him. He would have you lay up your treasure in heaven, where alone it is safe and ever available for you; but you decline the invitation; you prefer an earthly bank, and thus make it evident that God is not reliable, God is not true. You have more faith in man's promises than in those of God. He says, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not." But you do not ask Him for it; you are content with your own wisdom, your own idea of what should be done, and you shrink from the thought of committing yourself and your destinies to the direction of God. You do not care to have such a pilot at the helm. You believe that Christ came into the world, and died, and ascended up on high, and you think that some day it may be well to see what He can do for you; what does this show but that you think yourself now better off without Him? You are not letting God be true. You cannot trust yourself in His hands, though those hands were pierced for you.

You are a Christian, according to the modern conception; yet you do not expect that Christ will purify you unto Himself, will save you from all sin, will cleanse you from all unrighteousness. He can do it under certain circumstances, when you are beyond the reach of temptation, the assaults of Satan, the presence of an ungodly world; He can do it under specially favourable circumstances; but not while you are in the world. What is that but unbelief? You dwarf Christ; you make Him less than your foes; you eulogize His enemies; you cheat Him out of victory. "He that is born of God doth not commit sin," says the same beloved disciple, "for his seed remaineth in him." What is this seed? It is the word of God, instinct with the Spirit of God. This word is said to be quick, living. It does not remain dormant within you. The

Spirit of God is omnipresent; but when Jesus says that the Spirit of truth shall remain in His disciples, it is evident that He remains active, efficient, in them. Then they cannot sin, because they are led by the divine Spirit, the omnipresent Spirit, who certainly will give His sanction to no sin. His presence is the pledge of victory. This is the victory which overcometh the world—making it as though we were not in the world, but in the world beyond,—even our faith. If we do not believe that the Spirit of God within us is mightier than the forces against, we dishonour Him and limit Him. The Apostle makes it the condition of sonship that we should recognize this sin-subduer within us: "He that is born of God doth not commit sin, for His seed remaineth in him." Alas! it is to be feared that very many who claim to be the sons of God are not letting

God be true. God says that there is none good save One, that is God himself; to be good, we must have His goodness, His righteousness; we must live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave Himself for us. When we go into bankruptcy as far as our own goodness, our own power to keep the laws of God, our own ability to overcome temptation, are concerned, then we are ready to recognize the insufficiency of Christ for all the demands of our being, for all the requirements of God, for all the power and astuteness of the enemy. So far as we have observed, the failure of Christians is first in respect to total depravity, by which we mean their absolute inability to please God by strength or wisdom of their own. We are complete in Christ, but this cannot be while there is a shred of self-trust within us.—THE LATE GEORGE BOWEN.

Foreign Intelligence.

FRANCE.

[From our own Correspondent.]

March 16, 1888.

"BELOVED students for the ministry," so ran the words of Pastor Babut, of Nîmes, to the students of the Faculty of Montauban, "have you received the Holy Ghost? Have you had decisive experience of the Pentecost? Whatever others may do, neither you nor I can do without the Holy Ghost. To preach, to exhort, because one must, because the time for service is come; to repeat phrases borrowed from others,—can this be common? God knows; but how deeply sad! On the other hand, to speak of the things of God because one cannot do otherwise, what joy, what power! Tholuck was wont to say to his students, 'Beware of preaching before Pentecost!' And you, also, solemnly pledge yourselves not to leave this Faculty without having received the Holy Ghost; and as, in order to receive, you must ask, rise early so as to have full time for prayer. With your Bible open before you, implore, wait, and receive the Holy Ghost. Thus armed for the holy warfare, what victories will be yours! God can, and will, fill us with joy. Come, holy Comforter, come and anoint us as in the days of the Pentecost, of the Reformation, of the Revival! Cause the person of Jesus Christ to shine before our souls. Spirit of truth, Spirit of holiness, Spirit of love, Spirit of life,

breathe on all sides upon Thy Church, and transform these poor Christians, who scarcely know that there is a Holy Ghost, into living Christians, who shall proclaim with power the wonderful works of God." Such were the closing words of the third powerful discourse; and the students have requested the favour of frequent visits from the venerated pastor.

Exhilarating is the prospect of a generation of young pastors anointed by the Lord himself. Protestantism in France would then arise, and shine, and attract; for its light would have come again, and the glory of the Lord would have arisen upon it. This is the longed-for hidden spring, the spark from heaven—life. Without it, love is absent, power is nil. There may be well-organized societies, schools, services, lectures, but no growth; beautiful crystals, but no expanding life.

"When I see that man, I seem to see the devil!" Startled, the writer looked up, and saw in the distance a man toiling up an olive-clad hill, and then gazed at the speaker, chief leader of a church holding evangelical doctrines. "My dear pastor, how dreadful! I dined with him yesterday; but I saw nothing in him to remind me of the arch-foe." (This was some eighteen years ago.) "It is a fact, however," continued the irate gentleman; "he is the leader of the ———,

and he has actually decoyed members from my church." "Decoyed" was the wrong word. The church, with its irreproachable doctrines and various agencies, was all but crystallized into spiritual ice. The new converts, joyful, matter-of-fact Christians, radiant with the Spirit's love to souls, had thawed a few dependent icicles, which naturally had dropped from their frozen surroundings into a warmer berth. No undue influence had been used, no other decoy. If anything could have manifested the need of extraneous warmth, it was the harsh spirit with which it was resisted. Doubtless all who gather close under the healthful beams of the Sun of Righteousness radiate; they do and must attract; and should there be the smallest ember not extinct in those with whom they come in contact, their bright radiance will set it ablaze. Let each one seek the Spirit's three-fold cord—"power, love, and a sound mind." All who have put its potency to the test know that it is not to be broken, but sovereign for binding together in one the various sheaves of the Lord's own harvesting, whatever sowers, tillers, and reapers He may have chosen to employ—often the very last we should have expected.

This is also expressed in a remarkable discourse lately preached (and now in print) by Pastor H. Paumier, in Paris, on the warning Mordecai gave to Esther: "If thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall enlargement and deliverance arise from another place." "How is it that our fathers' influence on their times was so powerful, and that ours is so feeble? How is it that their ideas, sown in tears on an ungrateful soil, should have everywhere sprung up to the glory of God, while our progress is so scattered and so slow? Has the salt of the Gospel lost its savour? No, brethren; but for them, all the obstacles were from without; their resources were in themselves, in their manly courage, their firm convictions, their unreserved consecration to the service of God. As to us, alas! if outward resources abound, is not the obstacle within—in our languishing piety, in our lives, which altogether form so small a contrast with those of the children of this world? . . . Christians, if you let your hearts grow cold, if you do not invoke with all your powers a revival of faith and life . . . the ice of this world will freeze and paralyze your efforts. Do not depend for escape on the glorious past, of which you are the heirs. God needs no one; God, who is willing to use you, can just as well do without you. 'If thou holdest thy peace at this time, then

shall enlargement and deliverance arise from another place.' The Master of the vineyard will know how (even as He has done before) to find other vine-dressers more faithful. . . . What your fathers would have done, why should not you do it? If you are weak, is not God strength and help?"

Père Hyacinthe, preaching during Lent before congregations largely composed of Protestants—for his singular position of attempted equispoise scarcely attracts sincere Roman Catholics—also calls for reform, while he regards the Reformation as a failure! "Catholicism," he says, "such as the new dogmas have made it, cannot suit modern France. Popular miracles have possibly covered, as with a mask, the miracles of the Gospel; superstitious practices have obscured true piety, and deprived men of their Christian faith. Let science and religion unite; they will do great things; the religious spirit, which appears dead in France, will then awake, and do wonders. If this regeneration does not proceed from the Church herself, if the sons of the household do not raise up the walls of the crumbling homestead, unknown workers will accomplish the work. . . . Regeneration will come. Let us be citizens of the future."

By a clerical error in last month's letter, the Bible Society of France was misprinted British Society; its steady work of Bible dissemination is faithfully prosecuted. The Bible Carriage is still going its rounds under the persevering care of M. Pointet, who, in 1887, sold 6,850 copies of the Scriptures, gave freely 46,000 separate Gospels, and sold 8,690 almanacks and other religious sheets. Since 1871 (in eighteen years), the Bible Carriage has sold 104,567 Bibles and New Testaments, and given 821,500 Gospels.

A plan for a Protestant Society of Colonization in favour of poor Protestant families, honest and hard-working, to be encouraged to emigrate in the best possible conditions of success, is valiantly put forward by R. Réveillaud, in the *Signal*, to be sifted, discussed, and, he hopes, adopted. The choice of land seems to lie between Algeria, Canada, and Manitoba; and the good to be effected, the preservation and raising the tone of the Protestant emigrants, and through them carrying a pure Gospel and purvey of life into other countries; besides relieving France of the burden of many families whose precarious state in these times of distress cannot otherwise be permanently relieved.

The French Committee of the Lord's-day

Observance Society had offered prizes for the best memoirs, written by workmen, on the question: "Is not the domestic happiness of the labouring classes closely bound to the

observation and sanctification of the Sunday?" Forty-one memoirs have been sent in, of which five are deemed worthy of recompense, and will be printed.

GERMANY.

[From our own Correspondent.]

Berlin, March 15, 1888.

It is almost impossible to write anything else to-day but what occupies all hearts. The Emperor William is no more. The mourning, not only visible in black dresses, but in the hearts, is universal. The Emperor had to pass through hard days in his youth, and even in his manhood. His first impressions were from the time when Napoleon the Great thought of stamping out Prussia from the map of Europe, and in later years many will remember how he was obliged to seek refuge in England in 1848. All the more his later years were crowned with blessings which seldom fall to the lot of one man. The twenty-eight years of his government have been a time of almost unprecedented glory for Prussia and Germany. It is true that at first many of his subjects were opposed to him, because he resisted the attempts of the Chambers to curtail the army; but all these feelings passed after the victories. In later years he was truly the beloved of the nation. Every day crowds assembled before his palace to get a glimpse of the Sovereign, whose most remarkable feature was his great modesty. He never claimed for himself the merit of all he had done; he accordingly left the honour to his generals and Ministers, to the nation, and, above all, to the Lord of Lords. In his later years he had increased in his faith in God's providence, and he never hesitated to confess Christ. He was truly faithful also in small things. His end was peaceful and happy. He could, up to the last, hear the comforting words Dr. Kögel, his Court Chaplain, spoke to him from the Bible, and give assent to them. The happy end of a long and blessed life is something truly beautiful, and gratitude to God ought to be our first feeling. The fact, also, that the loss is deeply felt through all classes of the population reflects credit on our people. What makes that loss more deeply tragical is the state of health of our present Emperor. Since November last all eyes had been directed to San Remo, and many prayers have arisen to the throne of grace for his recovery. Now he has been obliged to come here in his illness, and we earnestly hope that the fatigues of the journey and the emotions of

the occasion, with the heavy responsibility of his office, will not prove too much for him. His proclamation to the nation will be welcomed everywhere. He also proposes "religious tolerance." This wise principle, always upheld by the Kings of Prussia, will, I hope, always gain more ground all over the world. The 22nd of this month, as the birthday of the late Emperor, will be kept by commemorative services.

The question referred to in my last letter, about increasing the salary of the clergy, has not been settled yet. In the first discussion in the House of Deputies different attempts were made by the Conservative party to propose a larger donation to the Church. The two Cabinet Ministers opposed the scheme, which was laid before the Committee of the House. We must await the result.

In the meantime, Dr. Büchsel, the well-known former General Superintendent and Pastor of St. Matthew's, has written a letter to the President of the Consistory, his friend, Dr. Hegel, urging him once more to see that more churches are built in Berlin. The letter has been published, and perhaps the voice of the old servant of Christ may do something to rouse the consciences. Until this can be realized, private activity continues to do the best here. Mr. Schrenk has again been evangelizing in our capital for a few weeks, and now Pastor Blumhardt, of Boll, in Württemberg, is here for a week; his time is amply occupied, as everybody wants to have a word from him. May his words prove a blessing to many! He is undoubtedly a servant of God in whom the Spirit is powerful.

The Salvation Army has also made an attempt to come here. They had one meeting, as a preliminary measure, which was allowed by the police. It was numerously attended, also by a number of scoffers. We must see what they will be able to do, especially whether they will attain people who are not reached by the means of grace. On the whole, there is not much sympathy here for the Army.

An event has recently proved how there are also dissensions among the Old Catholics. Pastor Riess, at Heidelberg, who long ago was in opposition to Bishop Reinkens, has now been deposed, and he has joined

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the Protestant Church. He is, perhaps, the most consistent of his church. The Roman system has been always developed more and more according to its consequences.

The Old Catholics try to make a stop at a certain phase of the development. This will do for a time, but finally they will have to decide between Catholicism and Romanism.

ITALY.

[From our own Correspondent.]

Rome, March 1888.

THE work of evangelization, in the sense of sowing the seed, goes on steadily throughout Italy, progressing quietly, but surely. The King and the Government strenuously uphold the Statute which guarantees religious toleration and liberty to all, while the Roman Catholic religion is recognized as the religion of the State. It rarely happens that an appeal made to the legally constituted authorities regarding any act of religious intolerance is ignored by them, or the aggressor escapes. It may be that now and then justice fails, but, as a rule, magistrates and judges are loyal and true.

Intimately united as are the German and Italian nations, it is of some moment to the latter to know what is likely to be the future political conduct of the new Emperor, Frederick the Third. The *Popolo Romano* (a Liberal paper, with a large circulation) remarked a day or two ago: "The 29th of October 1268 (a day fatal for the House of Hohenstaufen) was the moment when the political power of the Papacy was to be victorious and to preponderate throughout Europe. At the present time, the time in which we are living, that preponderance must end. It, in fact, ended when Rome was added to already united Italy; and, as a spiritual power, the Hohenzollerns, together with the majority of the German people, who belong to the Evangelical and enlightened section of the Church universal, know well how it should be dealt with in respect to its spiritual pretensions, which are, and always have been, excessive. The limitations are recognized in the Evangelical Church of Germany. The question is as to how the spiritual power of the Papacy is to be brought into harmony with the moral forces of the Europe of the present day. The matter cannot be settled by ignoring its existence, or in any other way than by applying to it the normal rules or conditions of right and wrong. The question of the spiritual supremacy intertwines itself with all others, especially in Germany and Italy. In Germany, where Protestants are in the majority, it will have to be treated fairly and righteously, not crushed and trodden down—as an equal, not

as a subordinate. In Italy it must be watched as a force which must not be permitted to imperil the unity of the country, or to be a hindrance to the development of the national conscience, as touching justice and good morals. What, then, we ask, will be the policy of the new Emperor with regard to this burning question? Without entering into details, it is clearly a most important subject, not only for Germany, but also for Italy. The training and the character of the new Emperor, and the history of the German people, ought to be a sufficient guarantee as to what may be expected. But to this may be added the fact that on the 10th of June 1878 the Emperor wrote a letter to Leo XIII., the contents of which also, and especially the interview which he had with the Pontiff when on a visit to the Quirinal in December 1885, will furnish a fair clue to what may be looked forward to in the future with regard to his policy with the Vatican. During this visit Frederick III., then Crown Prince, clearly expressed his views. In a conversation which he had with Leo XIII., the Prince endeavoured to avoid, with all possible courtesy, touching upon ecclesiastical affairs, especially with regard to the difficulties relating to the bishoprics of Posen and Limberg, and about which the Pope sought to elicit some expression of opinion. The Prince, however, gave him clearly to understand that he had come to Rome expressly to accept the hospitality which had been offered to him at the Quirinal, and afterwards to pay a visit of respect to his Holiness Leo XIII.; and in order that this visit should have no other character than that of simple courtesy, he arrived at the Vatican, not direct from the Quirinal, but from the Palazzo Caffarelli, the quarters of the German Embassy. On the question under debate neither the Prince nor the Pontiff would cede one iota. The whole story goes to prove that neither the Hohenzollerns nor the Popes ever forget what they conceive to be their rights, and that the determinations of both the one and the other can only be modified by reciprocal feelings, founded on Christian equity."

The joy which the King's birthday elicited among the people has been tempered with sorrow for the death of the

Emperor William. The journey to Genoa of his Majesty King Humbert, whither he went to condole with the present Emperor on his sad loss, has given the utmost satisfaction to the people generally; and the appointment of the Prince of Naples to represent his father and his country at the funeral of the late Emperor at Berlin is looked upon as an intimation that the son will pursue the same policy and maintain the same alliance with Germany as his father has done hitherto.

With regard to direct efforts of evangelization in the Eternal City itself, one of the most efficient is that connected with Mr. Wall's work. The large room in the Piazza Lucerna is open every night during Lent. Of course, there are regular Sabbath services here, and on certain week-days all through the year. This year the subject for investigation was "The Early Church." Owing to the inclemency of the weather, the attendance this year has not been quite so good as in preceding ones. There are five other places of meeting, connected with this mission, where the Gospel is faithfully presented to any who will come and hear. They are situated mostly in the midst of the neighbourhoods inhabited by the poorer classes, very densely populated, and where sickness and distress harbour and lodge. In four of these localities dispensaries have been opened, where poor people who need medical advice can obtain the same gratis; and these institutions have proved to be a great boon to the large number of sufferers who have applied for aid. The meeting established some thirteen years ago in the Trastevere by Mrs. Wall has had much blessing. When first set on foot, one very poor deaf woman was the only auditor; now 200 gathered within the room, thankful to listen to the Gospel truths which were put before them. A large basket of bread stood in one corner, close to the door. The loaves were distributed at the conclusion to the most necessitous. There is so much extreme poverty in this part of Rome that these loaves are a boon to the really needy. Mrs. Wall and her sister are very greatly beloved by these poor men and women. It is a real pleasure to hear them sing some of Moody and Sankey's hymns with so much heart as they do. The meetings take a very simple form. Mrs. Wall says: "We feel everything must yield to the one thing—the storing of their minds with the sweet words of Jesus. To this end, we select verses which are simple, and which contain the Gospel in its fullest form. Very few are able to read, so we have to make

them repeat the verses over and over again, that they may remember them. During the last year we have been teaching them a verse of Scripture for every day in the week, promising all those who could say them correctly a small reward. A large number have gained it, and now every morning they tell me they always remember to repeat their verse for the day. Many of the hymns are not only sung by them at the meetings, but in their little rooms of an evening, when the neighbours frequently come to listen." A few months ago Mr. Wall and his family were passing some time in the country, near Terni. As is their wont, pleasant chat and distribution of Testaments and portions, together with religious tracts, soon won the sympathy of the people. A simple service was held, and many listened. The wrath of the priests was aroused, and, going round, they collected the books from the unwilling people, and burnt them in the church. Fearing that their having given up the books to the priests would have displeased their kind Protestant friends, they rather avoided them, but finding that they were disposed to be as friendly as ever, they rallied to them again; and finally, Mr. Wall was able to hire the small theatre in the place, and there preach to them the words of eternal life. The band volunteered to lead the singing, readily acquiring the tunes used by Moody and Sankey. Mr. Wall and his family left amid expressions of the liveliest regret.

Some time since a young soldier received from Sig. Cappellini, in Rome, a Bible when his term of service in the army had expired. He returned to his native place, and there diligently read the Word of God, not only himself, but also to his friends and neighbours. The seed thus sown sank deep down into the hearts of many. A short time back Mr. Piggott (Wesleyan Methodist), going into the neighbourhood, was entreated to go and preach to those searchers of the Scriptures. Two hundred eager listeners greeted his coming, and drank in his words as the thirsty ground absorbs the rain. All these had been prepared for his coming, as it were, through the reading and spread of the truth by that one Bible, and its prayerful and diligent use by the young soldier. The neighbourhood around is arousing from the stupor produced by attending the mass, of which next to nothing is understood by the peasantry. Very many of them are still unable to read, and, therefore, cannot obtain even such gleams of light which occur in their mass books, the service being in an unknown tongue.

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"Any one sojourning in Rome cannot but be struck with the amazing amount of Sunday trading and work. From early dawn at least until mid-day, long lines of carts loaded with stones and bricks, and material for mortar, wind their way through the streets to the great centres of new buildings; masons and bricklayers and carters are as hard at work as ever they have been during the six preceding days. Just now being Lent, some of the shops are closed either for all the day, or for part of it. Prior to this, a very large proportion of the shops in the main thorough-fares, and even in the bye-streets, were open all day long, and quite up to eight or nine at night. Linendrapers, jewellers, boot and shoe shops, etc., were frequented by cus-

tomers. One lady I observed coming out of one of such places, with her mass-book in one hand and a newly-made purchase in the other! Thus it is easy to serve God and mammon. It must be very hard for conscientious Protestants to be engaged in places of business in Rome on this account. At the best, the working classes, especially the labouring classes, get only half a day's rest on the Sabbath, and that a short one. At the hours of service, in the Catholic churches, there are still large congregations to be found, the people joining in any such part of the service as they are permitted (such as in a Litany to the Virgin, or what not) with much devotion and fervour. It is most regrettable that their thoughts are not better directed.

SWITZERLAND.

(By the Continental Agent of the London Council.)

Lausanne, March 16, 1888.

A most remarkable manifestation of public feeling took place at Berne on the last day of February. All its citizens were astir. A procession of representatives of the Army and its officers, and of different societies, gymnasts, sharpshooters, working men and students, with 800 torch-bearers, preceded by a troop of horsemen, marched through the old city, making its arched passages ring again with their cheers. In one of the principal squares a municipal councillor spoke in the name of all assembled, and declared that the citizens of Berne, without any distinction of party, could not allow such a man as Monsieur Otto von Büren, who for twenty years had occupied the first place in their ranks, to return to private life without expressing their highest esteem for him and their gratitude. Monsieur Otto von Büren's character and work were known to all who had followed him during the forty years of his public life. He described his disinterested and unalterable fidelity in every duty, his unwearied willingness, which neither the injustice nor ingratitude sometimes shown him during his busy political career could break down. He reminded them that he had never been soured or discouraged by opposition, and that he had shown most remarkable tact and feeling when he was sent on a difficult mission to Strasburg in 1870, and brought out of the city, which was being bombarded, the widows and orphans who found a refuge in Switzerland. Tremendous applause burst forth after this speech. Monsieur Otto von Büren then addressed the people: "Dear and honoured Fellow Citizens,—I thank you for coming to bid me

such a grand adieu, when I am about to withdraw from the post of honour in which you have so long honoured me by your confidence. The honour belongs to Him who is above us all. If, during a long public life, the common weal has been advanced, I know how much of this is due to the help and support my colleagues and fellow citizens gave me. I do not feel that I deserve all you have said about my direction of your municipal affairs. I acknowledge this openly. I know how far short I have come of all I would wish to have done. Those who have been faithful and have rightly used the opportunities given them have a right to the same verdict as myself, and when we all appear before our Sovereign Judge, as we must all soon do, many will receive a more favourable testimony than I shall. Your meeting, however, has more than a personal reference to myself. It is a great reunion of parties in a common aim. These torches will soon cease to blaze, you will all soon disperse, but to-day's meeting proves that it is possible to work together, and my hope is that you will do so during the new period of public life on which you have entered. How much more healthy and fruitful this would be than passionate and angry party politics!" After alluding to the history of two great Swiss patriots whose monuments were close at hand, he concluded by saying: "God keep us all, and may He protect and bless our beloved fatherland!" I have told you of this most interesting episode in Monsieur Otto von Büren's life because he has ever acted as a Christian patriot. He has been always an admirable President both of the

Evangelical Society and the Bernese Branch of our Evangelical Alliance. He has never hidden his colours. Well known as a "Pictiste"—often attacked by adversaries or rallied by his friends for this—he has openly expressed his religious convictions; hence the striking character of this public ovation. "All must now acknowledge," says a German Swiss paper, "that it was Monsieur Otto von Büren's true piety that taught him how to fulfil his public duties, and gave him strength to remain faithfully at his post—never embittered by opposition, ever affable, kindly, sympathizing with the poorest and lowliest. This amiable optimism, fruit of his true Christian faith, kept him from all party spirit, led him loyally to stretch out his hand to political opponents, and kept up that joyous trust in God and that youthful spirit which public opinion had unanimously recognized on the 29th of February. We may say that it was not, notwithstanding his piety, but rather on account of it, that Monsieur Otto von Büren has rendered such eminent services, and has won such high esteem."

The Neuchâtel Society for the Evangelization of France has just published its fifteenth report, and gives very interesting and cheering news of Bible distribution in that country. A very remarkable colpor-

teur has been working there for many years. Our Lausanne Bible Society for some time helped our Neuchâtel brethren in keeping up this good work. Now Mr. Hawk, of the Crystal Palace, is specially interested in it. Monsieur Pointet has driven his Bible Carriage right through the length and breadth of the land—in the depths of winter, in the heat of summer. He appears on the market-place at fairs, blows a trumpet, gathers a crowd, and harangues the people in a most pithy and original manner. His sales have been very large indeed from the first. "I have met," he says in one of his monthly letters, "several friends whose acquaintance I made ten years ago. One man came up to me at the fair and said: 'As soon as I saw you, I said to my son, "There's the man who sold me a New Testament." We want to buy another, and the Prodigal Son [alluding to an engraving M. Pointet sold]; have you any left?' " Our brother meets with much opposition sometimes, but, all honour for this to the French Republic, he is perfectly free to sell his Bibles everywhere. May the blessed Spirit open the hearts of the people, that they may at last know the Christ of the gospels as their all-sufficient Saviour! There should be much prayer to God for this.

THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL IN THE SOUTH SEAS.

(From *Services for the King*.)

STRANGE theories have been lately mooted, and startling statements made, with respect to modern missionary work. It seems, indeed, as if the new impulse recently given to it had roused again some of the old cavils and calumnies that strove to stifle it in its birth a century ago. We are treated, in addition, to the novel suggestion that Christianity, God's own lever for raising fallen humanity, is not adapted to degraded races, and that they need the preparatory discipline and civilizing (!) influence of Mohammedanism to fit them to receive its teaching.

No one who feels any true interest in the matter, or cares for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom, need be careful to answer criticisms like these—strange, indeed, on professedly Christian lips, and equally strange, perhaps, as advanced by any one capable of weighing evidence, in the face of a compact phalanx of our greatest Indian administrators, both civil and military, supported by the testimony of every traveller who has really cared to investigate the matter.

For ourselves, we should be content to rest the whole burden of proof on the uncontested and incontestable facts of Christian missions in the islands of the South Seas; for surely we need not go in search of degradation below the depths of general and undisguised cannibalism. Nay, further, we should be willing to stake the whole upon the facts of three noble lives, unknown to us even by name till their histories, told by one who knew them well, thrilled us with a new sense of the glory of the grace of God.

It is to the Rev. Wyatt Gill, the veteran missionary who has spent nearly half a century in the South Seas, that we owe the following account.

Nasiline, a chief with whom he was intimate for many years, was both a worker and a sufferer for Christ, a man whom he and his colleagues deliberately counted worthy to stand beside some of the brightest examples of Christian heroism that have ever adorned the Church of God. And yet this man, consistent, nobly truthful, devoted

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and self-sacrificing, had grown to manhood as a heathen and a cannibal! Mr. Gill told us with graphic power, how Nasilipe, in one of their walks, took him to a secluded bay where part of the skeleton of a wrecked ship was still lodged, gaunt and weather-worn; and told him, with deepest self-abasement and gratitude, of one of the exploits of his heathen days, thus brought to mind—how he had planned to lure this ship ashore, and then, with his people, had seized, and killed, and eaten the fourteen white men who composed her crew!

Maretu, the next one mentioned, who was for thirty years Mr. Gill's much loved and valued assistant in the mission work at Raratonga, had also spent his boyhood and youth in the darkest savagery of heathenism. On one occasion, going with his father and a few others on a raid undertaken solely to gratify their cannibal propensities, they had surprised and murdered a whole family, and spent the night, as was their custom and their glory, sleeping among the bodies of their victims. Morning roused them to the important task of cutting up and dividing their prey, and it was then discovered that the head of one of the little children was already gone. Maretu had hidden it away stealthily for his private eating.

Yet of this man Mr. Gill testified that, in thirty years of constant intercourse, he could not point to a flaw in his Christian character, and never heard one even alleged by others. His force of character, his winning tact, and the spotless holiness of his life made him an untold power for good among his countrymen; and in any tribal difficulty, or any jealousy among the native churches, the missionaries always felt that the matter was safe in Maretu's willing hands. His apostolic life was closed by a death of saintly peace and dignity. Lying in a house near the little church, he prayed that he might live till Sunday morning, to hear once more the sound of the hymns he had loved so long. His desire was granted, and then, lifting up his hands, he blessed his sorrowing people, praying that the Spirit of the living God might ever dwell among them, and so "fell asleep" in Jesus.

Tauraki, the third instance named, belonged to a younger generation, and was baptized in infancy; his father, Elikana, being an eminent deacon and evangelist in the native church. Gifted by nature as well as grace, a good English scholar, married to a Christian wife, and happily settled as catechist

and schoolmaster among his own people, a peaceful and happy life seemed to lie before the young Tauraki. But he had heard the call of Christ, and could not but "leave all and follow Him." When it was proposed, a few years ago, to open a new mission among the fierce tribes of New Guinea, Tauraki was one of the first to volunteer. The missionary, who loved him as his own son, was fain to dissuade him, or at least to point out plainly all the dangers he would run; but it is no strange thing among these South Sea Islanders to face death for Christ, and Tauraki could not be deterred. He went with his wife, and did good service among the Motumotuans near Port Moresby, gaining great influence among these "wild, rowdy natives." Then, only last year, a blood feud arose between them and the Moriavians; and Tauraki, going up country on a peaceable errand, with five of his converts and his wife and adopted child, was surrounded by a party of the latter tribe. His plea that he was a foreigner, and a stranger to their feuds, was admitted by the savages, who gave him leave to depart, but refused to spare the Motumotuans, because though innocent, they belonged to the hostile tribe. Tauraki's noble rejoinder was, "They are my children—if you kill them, you must kill me first;" and the next moment they all fell beneath a hail of arrows. The five Motumotuans were all despatched, and the three others left insensible, but when Tauraki recovered consciousness he found the child dead also. Drawing the arrows from his wife's wounds and his own, he again fainted, and they were found thus by some boys of the party, who had been fishing at a distance during the attack. The lads put them into the canoe, and paddled it back to Motumotu, where the devoted pair were tenderly nursed by a Norwegian gentleman who had settled there for the purpose of opening up trade, and his English wife. The wife survived and was placed in safety with the mission in Hall Sound, but the heroic young evangelist lies in a martyr grave among his "children" in the faith.

Words can add nothing to the weight of lives like these. If any should object that they are exceptional instances, we need only ask, "Are such common among ourselves?" And we may also boldly state the indisputable fact that in hundreds of these southern isles, once sunk in grossest darkness, the standard of both religion and morality is higher far than prevails in Christian England at the present day.

Missionary Notes.

THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY AT ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.—The special service at St. Paul's Cathedral, on Tuesday evening, February 14, was a very interesting occasion. An immense congregation assembled, which filled dome, transepts, and nave, and extended to the west door; and large numbers went away for lack of room. The Rev. E. A. Stuart preached on the text for the day in the Church Missionary Almanack, "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Est. iv. 14). The sermon was a fervent and powerful appeal to Englishmen, to Churchmen, to Protestants, to act up to their privileges, and to send the Gospel over the world. The Lessons were read by the President of the Society, Sir John Kennaway, and the Rev. T. W. Drury, Principal of the Church Missionary College. The choir of the Diocesan Lay Helpers' Association led the singing, and the simple chants and hymns were taken up by the whole congregation with great heartiness. A numerous band of members of the Church Missionary Society's Lay Workers' Union for London acted as stewards, under the leadership of Mr. G. Martin Tait. Among those present were the Earl and Countess of Harrowby, Mr. Abel Smith, M.P., Lady Kennaway, and a large number of the most active and faithful of the Society's members and friends in London. There was but one feeling of satisfaction and thankfulness for such a service. But, as most of our readers are aware, this service has led to no small anxiety and controversy, owing to the unveiling of the new reredos a week or two before. The resolution adopted by the General Committee on the subject will be found in the selections from their proceedings, and we have no desire to enter into the controversy. We deeply deplore the erection of the reredos at all, as a grievous offence to large numbers of loyal Churchmen; and still more do we deplore its being unveiled just before our service. Some of our most honoured friends desired that, if it were possible, the Society should withdraw from the service, even at the last moment, as the only effective form of protest. Others, equally honoured and equally faithful to the Protestant principles of the Society, deprecated this, both because withdrawal would imply the abandonment of the just claim of Evangelical Churchmen to a share in the

Cathedral, and because it would cause grave embarrassment to large numbers of our London friends. Various proposals were submitted to the Committee, at two successive meetings, but the only one carried was the one printed on another page, and that was carried *non. con.* Of course, opportunity has been taken of this untoward incident to attack the Society. But when the oldest of the lay members of Committee, Mr. Alexander Beattie, affirms, after fifty-eight years' service in India and England, that he sees no change whatever in the Society's principles, we are quite sure that it will live down these attacks, as it has lived down others. The Committee seek God's guidance in earnest prayer, and we firmly believe He does guide them.—*Church Missionary Intelligencer.*

PERSLA.—The Rev. Dr. Bruce, in a communication to the *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, says: "We have no opposition from Moslem priests or people worth mentioning. The latter, in nine cases out of ten, gladly receive our colporteurs and evangelists, and welcome their visits. The Moslem priests now have lost all their power for good or evil in Persia. The Persian Government is also most liberal in its treatment of Christians and Jews, but through the intrigues of the Roman Catholic and (led by them) of the Armenian ecclesiastics, it allows Protestant Christians to be oppressed, and thereby gives us very great trouble. During all my mission life among Mohammedans, every persecution and opposition to our work from which we have suffered has been set on foot, not by Moslems, but by nominal Christians. Then as to varieties of peoples and languages. Besides English, Greek, and Hebrew, we need Arabic (for Baghdad and the stations in the Persian Gulf), Persian, and Armenian. We have a large population of Jews, over 30,000 in Baghdad alone, to whom, as in every mission-field, the Gospel should first be preached. In some places, notably Kashan, they seem ready to receive the Gospel. We must look for our fellow-labourers from among the Eastern churches, and, therefore, we must in some degree work for them. God has greatly blessed our work in this department. I never met with more faithful labourers in the Lord's vineyard than some of my Armenian and Nestorian brethren. Of these I would mention by name the Rev. Minassian George, our native-pastor at

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Julfa; Mr. Carapiet Johannes, teacher of the boys', and Mr. Hyrapiet, teacher of the girls' school; Mr. George Mackertich, depositary of the British and Foreign Bible Society; Benjamin Badal, our well-known Kurd interpreter; Pitrus Gallatan, Albert Simon, Barick Leon, Paul Arratoon, Jacob Galocet, and others. The mission in Baghdad was begun, and a first-rate foundation laid, by George Mackertich and Benjamin Badal, and carried on by them without any European superintendence, with much blessing and success, for a considerable time. The mission in Basra has been begun by Albert Simon and Barick Leon. In large towns like Baghdad, for instance, there are a considerable number of Eastern Christians to be found, many of whom have congregated there from other places, who are really attached to no church, and for whom no form of worship is so suitable as that of the Church of England. Some of these have been under the instruction of American missionaries, others under no instruction. A congregation of about seventy of these gathered around Mr. George Mackertich and Benjamin Badal in Baghdad. Such wandering sheep require the most gentle treatment; they are quite willing to join at once in our scriptural liturgy, and prefer (the majority of them) Episcopacy to Presbyterianism. But they cannot be forced into everything that is by some persons considered Anglican in a moment. Any truly spiritually minded Evangelical clergyman of the Church of England will find but little difficulty in keeping them together, provided he treats them with gentleness and forbearance, and has learned to act towards Easterns with the same respect for their feelings as he would towards Europeans. The only way to treat an Eastern is to respect him just as much as

a European, be ready to call on him and hear all his complaints, and yet not try and force on him Western ideas, but accommodate oneself to his Eastern prejudices. Out of such materials, rough as they were at first, God has raised up our best workers. They form a congregation for the celebration of public worship, which the Moslems attend in considerable numbers; where they can have, what they have never yet had in any Eastern church, an opportunity of hearing the prayers and praises of God, and the Word of God read and preached in their own tongue. It was in this way that mission work began on the day of Pentecost, when Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and dwellers in Mesopotamia (all from our mission-field) heard Galileans speaking in their tongues the mighty works of God. . . . I have the very highest opinion of our native helpers. It is to them that we must look for the real evangelization of the country. When I look back on the years that are past, they are my comfort and joy, my crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus. True, they are very few in number, and I might be tempted to say, 'I have spent my strength for naught, and in vain.' But I try to picture to myself the closing scenes in the life of the 'Great Apostle,' and of His greatest followers as they reviewed the fruits of their labours. Behold Him surrounded by His little flock of eleven Galilean peasants: 'Father, I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do; I have manifested Thy name unto the men whom Thou gavest me. I pray not for the world, but for those whom Thou gavest me out of the world. Neither pray I for these alone, but for all who shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me.' "

NOTICES OF BOOKS.

The Latin Works of John Wyclif, now for the first time Published. Wyclif Society: Trübner & Co.

THREE volumes, of which eight are already before us, offer helps in studying the moral making of England, such as we know not of in any other quarter. When the French magistrates are investigating a case of alleged crime, they do what they call "reconstituting the crime;" that is, they place the accused offender in the scene of the deed, surrounded, as far as may be, with all its accessory circumstances. Now, any one who wants to know what England was from 500 to 600 years ago, to "reconstitute" its moral, social, and religious life, has only to ponder over these works as they come at last out of the tomb in which the Inquisition had laid them. Not that Wyclif describes either scenes

or actions. He speaks to those who familiarly know them; but the very case of his assumption made a refuge for criminals, defying the law and finding cover in the sanctuary, makes you see it. So the case of the assumption that bishops keep in their palace places of execution, makes you see the scaffold and the pit. The fact that you are over and over and over again assumed to be perfectly familiar with the loss of estates to their natural heirs, and their addition to the overgrown possessions of the clergy, makes you feel the thing to be a reality. So on with regard to class, of civil law, to canon law, of morals in the laity to morals in the clergy, of property to the Church, and the Church to property, of the national authorities to the Papal power, and of

Christian doctrine to the Holy Scriptures on the one hand, and the innovations of Rome on the other. He who will only mark the various facts here assumed as within the cognizance of all will acquire a picture of our land as it then existed drawn in outlines admitting of no question, and filled up with definite forms and living figures to an extent one would scarcely think possible. On the other hand, he who will note what is censured, what resisted, what aspired after, what set up as the standard of appeal, will readily appreciate the processes whereby was wrought the great change to which we owe this England instead of that one. If what is to us a picturesque group of windows, gables, and towers, called an abbey, was to the man of the fourteenth century "Cain's Castle,"—i.e., when he durst speak his mind,—we here learn to realize what made it so, and that without one word of impure delineation. If we want the artistic visions of Piers Ploughman, the homelier pictures of the Ploughman's Creed, or the broad, coloured sketches of Chaucer reduced to sober forms, and subjected to tests that had to pass under the eye of both prince and bishop, of both university and rural congregation,—here we have it done. The polemics, the philosophy, the homilies of the statesman, theologian, professor, and village preacher both, throw floods of light upon every topic of the day, as well as upon the then existing institutions in Church and State.

And these books lay hidden for 500 years, and it is not to Oxford, but to Germany, that at last we owe the first of them. English blood may tingle in our cheeks at reading of such a thing. Dr. Robert Vaughan, about half a century ago, was the first to enter on the recovery of Wyclif's writings and history. Canon Shirley and Mr. Thomas Arnold, of Oxford, as also Dr. Todd, of Trinity College, Dublin, learnedly followed in the track he had made. This gave us the English works; but who read them? To most people reading of English of the fourteenth century is not more inviting than would be travelling upon the roads of that time. It may sound strange, but perhaps the Latin works will render the English ones popular. They are as easy reading for those who know Latin as the others are hard for those who know only modern English, and the impulse they must give both to religious and historical thought will not be without a reaction on our knowledge of middle English—that rude but racy forefather of our own cosmopolitan speech.

It looks like a highly poetical satire on the scholars of England that Wyclif's great work, "De Civili Dominio," which raised many gusts

of controversy, should come to light as it does. There is a land where

"Kings in dusty darkness hid,

Have left a nameless pyramid;"

and there is a gentleman well known to the public as able in dissipating the darkness, and rendering into modern tongues the names of those long-buried magnates. It was somewhere between the obelisk at On and the pyramid of Cheops that we first heard from Mr. Læder the name of a young man—Reginald Lane Poole. Now, this notorious resurrectionist it is who comes before Dr. Jowett, with the "De Civili Dominio" in his hand, and making his bow to the present Master of Balliol, tells him that to him this work of a former Master of Balliol is dedicated by its first editor.

After 500 years, and many more, its first editor! In what sepulchre has it lain ever since the printing press was invented? what stone was set against the door? and who rolled it away? These are questions which the memorable work of Lechler, "Johann von Wiclif und die Vorgeschichte der Reformation," will answer at full, and which the valuable introductions of Loerth, Buddenwig, and Beer, as well as those of our own countrymen—Messrs. Poole, Harris, and Pollard—will well illustrate. The tale of the travels of those books in manuscript to Bohemia, of the tempests they there raised, of their burning, of their long captivity in the museums of Prague and Vienna, and of their final release by the intervention of the Wyclif Society, is a long and instructive one. If they could write their autobiography, it would be worthy to go side by side with that of the "Liber Diurnus," not that we know of this having been as yet penned. No seat of learning in England or America can afford to be without these Latin works of Wyclif; no more can any public library of any pretensions to serve students. It is not so many years ago that the "Dialogus" was spoken of in Quaritch's Catalogue as the only existing Latin work of Wyclif, and was priced at six guineas. Here we have it, one of the smallest of the eight volumes already in print. We hope the others will appear with no more delay than is unavoidable.

Friendly Letters. By Miss SKINNER. Jarrold & Sons, 3 Paternoster Buildings.

ANOTHER of this admirable series of "Friendly Letters" to different classes, has been issued, addressed to "shoemakers." As every one of our readers employs a shoemaker, much good might be done by obtaining copies of this letter and handing them to the particular class interested. Miss Skinner says that if addresses are sent to her, with a penny stamp, she will post copies herself.

SABBATH OBSERVANCE PRAYER UNION.—The usual call to united prayer, for the entire sanctification of the Lord's-day, has been issued by the Committee of this Union; but we regret that our space is so occupied this month that we are unable to give it in full. The date fixed for united prayer is from the 1st to the 8th of April, and papers referring to the subject may be obtained of Mr. J. W. Leng, 337 Strand.

. In consequence of the length of our report of the Special Meetings of the Evangelical Alliance we are compelled to hold over a number of interesting articles, and also communications from Palestine, Sweden, etc., as well as several Missionary Notes.

Evangelical Alliance.

SPECIAL MEETINGS FOR UNITED TESTIMONY ON THE FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS OF THE GOSPEL.

WEDNESDAY, March 14, will be regarded as an epoch in the history of the Evangelical Alliance. On that day, in loving response to the Lord's call, a banner was displayed on which was inscribed "Loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ, the King of kings." Many faithful servants of the King rallied round it, and members of the various Evangelical churches joyfully united in a faithful testimony to God and His truth. At the early hour of half-past ten the doors of Exeter Hall were opened, and a crowd of persons, largely composed of men, were hastening to obtain seats, and before eleven o'clock the body of the spacious hall, as well as the galleries and platform, were nearly filled. Most deeply interested and thankful were those who had been for months past labouring in the love of Christ to arrange for the meetings to witness the eager expectation of the people, and which found expression in the warm greeting given to the Chairman and others as they arrived on the platform. The President of the Evangelical Alliance, Lord Polwarth, was prevented coming from Scotland to preside owing to the illness of Lady Polwarth, and Mr. Donald Matheson, the Chairman of the Council, therefore, took his place. The proceedings commenced with singing the triumphant hymn, "All hail the power of Jesus' name;" and after the 95th Psalm had been read, and prayer offered by the Rev. Dr. Stoughton (one of the Hon. Secretaries of the Alliance), the Chairman called upon the Secretary of the Alliance to read a letter from Lord Polwarth, in which, after expressing great regret at his enforced absence, he wrote: "I wish, however, to express my deep sympathy with this movement for the upholding of the great fundamental doctrines of Evangelical religion. I think it only right that it should be known that this is not a hurried or sudden course of action on the part of the Council. It has been in contemplation for many months, and has no connexion with any recent movements in any church. . . . Probably there never was a time when these doctrines were more fully and widely set forth than the present; but, on the other hand, we feel deep regret that in many influential quarters there is a grievous distortion of Gospel preaching, and a lamentable omission of the distinctive doctrines of Evangelical religion. The practical effect of such teaching is far greater than is supposed—leading on to infidelity and gross materialism. I trust that the course now adopted by the Alliance will further a widespread diffusion of Evangelical religion in the spirit of brotherly love."

The Rev. Canon Girdlestone was then requested to give his address, the subject allotted to him being "The Inspiration, Authority, and Sufficiency of Scripture." His earnest, solemn manner impressed at once his hearers, and, as he proceeded, the attention of all was closely riveted, and the hearty assent to the testimony he so forcibly gave was again and again exhibited enthusiastically by the large assembly. A hymn, "Rock of Ages," followed the address; and then the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, the much-esteemed pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, stepped to the front, and was received with prolonged applause. His subject was one most congenial to his ministry, "The Unchangeable Gospel." For forty minutes he held the audience enthralled as he unfolded the marvellous grace, love,

and power of God in the Gospel, and scattered, like chaff to the winds, the false theories propounded by the advocates of "Modern thought." The address was very characteristic, and often accompanied by humorous illustrations and sallies. The Rev. Canon Fleming's address was shorter than those of the previous speakers, as the hour for closing was near, but it was given in the grace and power of the Spirit; the subject was "The Work of the Holy Spirit." Prayer by the Ven. Archdeacon Richardson closed this very cheering and profitable meeting. Mutual congratulations followed as friends bade each other good-bye, and many were the expressions of thankfulness that the Evangelical Alliance had called forth so powerful a testimony to God and to His truth.

The Lower Hall was filled in the afternoon at the united meeting for prayer. General the Hon. R. M. Ward presided, and, after prayer had been offered by several brethren, addresses were given by the Rev. F. B. Meyer and the Rev. E. W. Moore. The large gathering of the Lord's people drank in with delight the deep spiritual teaching which both speakers imparted, and it was a season of true spiritual refreshing.

The weather in the evening became very boisterous and wet, and the attendance was much diminished, not more than about 500 persons being present. Lieut.-General Sir Robert Phayre occupied the chair, and the speakers were the Rev. E. E. Jenkins, the Rev. H. C. G. Moule, and the Rev. Dr. MacEwan. The subjects were "The Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God;" "The Lord Jesus Christ, the Righteousness of the Believer;" and "The Holy Ghost, the Author and Sustainer of Spiritual Life." The testimony on these vital truths was clear and faithful, and greatly appreciated by the audience. It was only to be regretted that the inclemency of the weather had prevented many from coming to hear. At the close of this first day all realized, with deep thankfulness, how God had answered prayer, and, by His dear servants, had lifted up a standard in Jesus' name against the enemy in defence of the truth.

On Friday, March 16, meetings had been arranged for the west of the metropolis, to take place in Kensington Town Hall, in the morning, afternoon, and evening. The weather was very wintry, and the bitter north-east wind which prevailed all day doubtless hindered numbers from coming. The Rev. Dr. Stoughton presided at the morning meeting, General Sir Arthur Lawrence in the afternoon, and W. Shepherd Allen, Esq., in the evening. The fine hall was half filled on the first occasion, and the revered Principal of Regent's Park College (the Rev. Dr. Angus) gave an earnest, faithful testimony to "The Inspiration, Authority, and Sufficiency of Scripture." As a veteran soldier of the Cross, his long experience added great weight to his address. The Rev. E. A. Stuart evidently rejoiced in the opportunity to stand forth as a witness for his Master, and for forty minutes he spoke, in the power of the Spirit, on "The Lord Jesus Christ, the Propitiation for Sin, and the Righteousness of the Believer." The eager attention of his hearers showed how warmly they sympathized with the speaker in all that he so eloquently said. At the afternoon meeting, the Rev. W. Fuller Gooch gave a beautiful address on "Fundamental Truth in its Relation to Spiritual Life." The speaker and the hearers all seemed to be strengthened and refreshed by the wise and comforting words spoken.

The attendance at the evening meeting, when the inclemency of the weather was considered, was very good; and the remarkable address given by the Rev. H. W. Webb-Peploe must have proved a rich compensation to all who had braved the intense cold by coming to the meeting. The subject was a very important one: "The Entrance of Sin into the World; its Extent and its Consequences." The Holy Spirit enabled His servant to deliver these heart-searching truths with great power, and at the same time to expose the shallowness and unscriptural character of the objections raised by those who boast of increased enlightenment. The Rev. H. Batchelor followed with his address on "The Propitiation for

Sin ;" and the closing address, on "The Lord Jesus Christ, the Righteousness of the Believer," was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Sinclair Paterson. These true-hearted, faithful servants of Christ unfolded these precious, soul-satisfying truths with eloquence and power, not only from the Scripture, but from the ripe experience of many years spent in the service of Christ.

Many of the addresses delivered during these first two days' proceedings are given below, and others will appear in the next number of *Evangelical Christendom*.

THE INSPIRATION, AUTHORITY, AND SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE.

By the Rev. Canon GIBBLESTONE, M.A., Oxford.

(Address delivered at Easter Hall on March 14.)

My subject being the Inspiration, Authority, and Sufficiency of Scripture, it seems to me my first business must be to begin with the last word. What is Scripture? What are the Scriptures? We divide them into the Old and the New Testaments, for I omit all reference to the Apocrypha. Beginning with the Old Testament: it contains thirty-nine books, received and held by Jews and Christians alike to be the writings of Moses and of the prophets—taking the word prophet in a large sense, as not merely a person who predicts, but a man of God acting under the direction of God. This collection of books we call the Old Testament; it is the growth of a thousand years, which came to a close in the days of Nehemiah—that is, about 400 years before Christ. Since that time I do not suppose anything material has been added to the Old Testament, though occasional notes may have been inserted. This collection is accepted by us on the authority of Christ and His apostles. We have abundant reason for knowing that the Hebrew Scriptures, authorized and verified by Christ, are the very Old Testament books we now possess. We do not need to enter on the question of how the Jews were led to accept the canon of Scripture. They received it partly on oral and partly on written evidence. Into this I do not go. Suffice it here to say we accept the Old Testament on the authority of Christ and His apostles.

But, putting aside the collection, we may look at the thirty-nine individual books. What are we to say of these books? The books of the prophets and others have the names of the writers attached and the dates indicated. Some others can be judged by the contents, and the date fairly ascertained. But a large number are anonymous, and we gather their date and position by certain literary signs. Amongst these I mention one—viz., that it was the habit of the sacred writer to make use of the materials supplied by earlier writers. For example, Nehemiah made use of Ezra, and Ezra of Chronicles, and Kings of Samuel, and Samuel of Moses. I do not stop to inquire if Moses used patriarchal documents or tablets, such as you may see in the British Museum. I have no doubt that Abraham possessed, and carried out from Ur of the Chaldees, some such writings. These being preserved and added to, may have been handed on to Joseph, and from him to Moses. I do not enlarge on this at present, but it is very interesting to know that, even on purely literary grounds, the date of writing has been pushed back to the age of the patriarchs at least; and thus the historic age is pushed back, because if the age of written or inscribed records be pushed back, the

historic age is pushed back. Thus we have in Genesis historic documents put together by Moses, many of them dating back to the earliest times of the patriarchal history.

Now, in dealing with the New Testament, we are in a very different position altogether. It is all held by all Christians as written in one generation—or two at the most; that generation from which Christianity streamed over the whole world, east and west, north and south; and all as the work of the apostles and prophets of Christianity. By New Testament prophets (or men of God) I mean those who answered to the position of the Old Testament prophets, as acting under God's directions. It is best, in dealing with the New Testament, to take the individual books first and the collection subsequently. We can trace each book by means of the *ms.* version and quotations from the age of printing back to the age in which it was written. The Epistles themselves almost always bear the name of the writer, and in one notable exception—the Epistle of St. John—the style is so manifest that there can be no doubt it was written by the author of the fourth Gospel. But when you come to the Gospels you find they are anonymous, and yet have names attached; and these come from early tradition. Similarly in the case of certain classical works, such as those of Euripides and Herodotus, their names as authors of the books they had written were not mentioned until a century after the books came into being. Thus you see the weight to be given to tradition. Now we have in these books the glorious testimony of eye-witnesses to the great facts on which Christianity hangs, and we feel we have before us the work of men whose eyes beheld and whose hands handled the Word of Life. Thus we are not following a myth or a cunningly devised fable, but following the leadership of men on whom Christ breathed, and in whom His Spirit wrought, and who fought and worked and died for Christ.

The collection of the New Testament books grew gradually, as the individual writings spread from country to country. Probably it was two centuries before all the churches scattered throughout Christendom had got all the books; but by-and-by the different churches in the various provinces were found to be of one mind with regard to the books to be included in the canon of the New Testament. It is sometimes said the Church gave us the Bible. It is quite true in a sense. Each generation handed down the Scripture to the next generation, as I trust we shall hand it down intact to the generation which shall follow us. But before the Church gave us the Bible she received it, received it from Christ

and His apostles, who received it from God. We are not dependent on the Church for the Old Testament, which is manifestly a Jewish book. Nor are we dependent wholly on the Church for the New Testament, because we have the Syriac Version, and *Codex Sinaiticus*, nearly complete. The ancient Church of Rome received a letter from St. Paul, and very probably the Acts of the Apostles was written in Rome; but that Church received the rest of the sacred writings from the other churches, and all had completed copies of the New Testament. I wish the modern Church of Rome were as anxious to spread the Word of God as the ancient Church was.

So much for the Scriptures; now I come to Inspiration. I do not accept the Bible because it is inspired, but I accept inspiration because I have got the Bible. Inspiration is attributed to the Old Testament in the New. I do not stay to remind you of various passages, such as 2 Tim. iii. 16, from which, if the authority of the New Testament be accepted, the inspiration of the Old becomes clear. But how do I get the inspiration of the New? That is a different case. I get it by analogy first of all; it is analogous to the Old Testament. And, second, I get it on the strength of certain promises made by the Lord Jesus and recorded in the Gospels—such as you find in John xiv., and certain chapters of Matthew, as the tenth. Thus on the strength of analogy, and of the promise of Christ, I accept the New Testament as inspired, just as the New Testament writers accepted the Old Testament as inspired. Some people say all writings are inspired. Well, yes, that is true, but whether by God or the devil is a different question. The inspiration of which we are now speaking is the action of the Spirit of God on the spirit of man. It is of many kinds and degrees.

Moreover, besides all ordinary forms of inspiration, there are extraordinary functions. The Spirit of the Lord inspired Bezaleel, the son of Uri, with wisdom, Samson with strength, and Micaiah, the son of Imlah, to predict. Similarly the Spirit of God inspired others to write, and these inspired writings form the canon of Scripture. That is what we come to. Many persons prophesied whose words we have not got in the inspired Book, and many things are recorded by inspiration which are not direct prophecy, nor, strictly speaking, revelation. We have to distinguish between revelation and prophecy and history. What is the consequence? We look on Divine revelation on various subjects as the heart and core, and history as the framework. With regard to the first, God spoke in divers manners, in different ways and at different times, by dreams, visions, voices, and angels. With regard to the second, God used various instruments and materials to form the framework of historic truth; and in directing men to pen these inspired writings, He instructed them to use the whole means at their command—memory, knowledge, imagination, the power of argument, logic, and language. For this purpose these holy men of old used various oral traditions, the tablets and edicts of kings and monarchs. Again, these writers used the language of that day—not of this day or of the last day; though, as a leading scientist has said, "When you get to the science of the last day you will find it very like the science of the Bible." The

men used their mother tongue to express what God put before their mind's eye. Thus you have a treasure in earthen vessels, yet you have the treasure; for you have a Record of a Revelation penned by men in whom the Spirit of God was working, directing, suggesting, controlling, quickening memory, quickening understanding, guiding reason, both as to topic and method, giving the message and enabling each man to write it according to His mind.

Now from inspiration I pass on to authority. The inspiration being settled, authority becomes an easy matter. When the authority of Scripture is appealed to, some say No. Therefore, we must seek to be clear on this point. There are various degrees of authority—that of parents, of the Church, of rulers, of conscience, and so on. We must not despise any one of these; but we must be careful to acknowledge the paramount authority of the Book of God. Some say we must receive Scripture *cum grano*; yes, by all means, if you add the word *salsis*. Use your faculties, bring your faculties to bear on it, see your head is clear and your heart warm. See you draw your conclusions from a plain text of Scripture, not from fancy texts. Do not build an argument on an illustration. Study the context. Compare Scripture with Scripture. Consider the age of the writer, and whether he presents developed truth or comparatively undeveloped truth. Consider the various points of view in which God has set forth the same truth. When you have done so and arrived at the clear teaching of the Word, then bow to it; if it is of God, we must stick to it. Why, for example, do we believe the doctrines of the Trinity, and of the future punishment of the wicked? Some say, I believe them because my mother taught them me—a very good reason, but not sufficient. Others say, Because they are in the Catechism, in the Trust-deed of our chapel, or in the Thirty-nine Articles. Another goes back to a Creed long before the Articles; and another to the Councils. But remember, at the first council there was a chair on which were deposited the four Gospels. The Word of God was the Chairman, and all authority rests on and points back to "It is written." Observe the authoritative place given in the New Testament to the Old Testament by the words, "It is written," which occur over twenty times. Truth is truth, and remains so. Everything that has happened has happened, whether it be one year or one million years ago.

Now, lastly, there is the sufficiency of the Word. One of the Articles of the Church, to which I have the honour to belong, says: "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation." I know we have to qualify the phrase, "The Bible, the Bible only." The Word does not set out all things convenient to church purposes. It is not an encyclopædia of all things human and things divine; of the times to hold services, of having a meeting in Exeter Hall, and so on. It does not lay down strict rules about the procedure of our meetings for prayer, or (with all respect to my brother here) does it decide, I venture to think, who is to be baptized, or how. I do not think you get from the Scripture a formal set of rules for all matters of church and everyday life.

Still, after making these deductions or qualifications, we claim that Scripture is sufficient.

Some says: "No; it needs an interpreter." I agree; it does need an interpreter. Because a man can read and possess a sixpenny Bible, it does not follow he knows everything. Even the youngest of us are liable to error. Therefore, study the Word; do not despise a dictionary and grammar, parental or pastoral teaching. Do not be always using a commentary. Seek prayerfully to discover the meaning yourself first, and accept help from commentaries. Do not despise the well-weighed judgment of grand old Councils, Creeds, and Catechisms. Study the great men who have gone, as well as the great men who remain. These are all good gifts. Get all the help you can from history as to the state of things existing at the age of Christ. What a mercy, for example, to have Josephus! Sometimes when reading Paul's words, "God shall smite thee, thou whitened wall," we wonder if Ananias was smitten. He was smitten, being compelled to hide in a ditch, taken from thence and slain. That we find in Josephus. In this way help is to be got in various directions. But, while I say this, I add: keep things in their order. There is no library like these sixty-six books (the Bible), no commentary like them, no book of illustrations or sermons like that wonderful Book. Go back from the fathers to the grandfathers, from things mediæval to things primeval. And remember, above all, the true Vicar of Christ, the true Interpreter, is the Holy Ghost. Let us seek more of the Spirit of Christ, more of the spirit of prayer, more of the spirit of devout and reverent study of the Word, and

we shall understand it better, and get nearer one to another.

Now, in closing, let me ask: First, Do you believe in God? Do you believe in Him whom Christ called God? Can you say, "He is my God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"? Second, Do you believe God can speak to men? Can He? He has given you power to speak. Has He reserved to Himself the power to speak to you? or, while giving you the power, has He cut Himself off from that power? It seems irrational to think so; and it would take very strong reasons to make me believe it. Third, If God can speak, has He spoken to man? Has He spoken, or has He not? He has. Why has He spoken? Here, on the one side, is human need; and there, on the other, is the historic record of Jesus. My whole theory of Revelation hangs on the work of Jesus as the Redeemer. God has broken silence, and His object is the redemption of man. When once you get hold of that as the centre, you realise that the Bible is the Word of God; that prophets and apostles spoke as they were moved of the Holy Ghost.

Then, the Bible being the Word of God, I thank God for it. I have got it. I cling to it. I will live with it, and die with it. And when the day comes to die with it, may some of these glorious everlasting passages of old fall on our ears, affording such comfort as they did to one now lying in state in Berlin. May we, with him, be enabled to say: "That's beautiful; that's good; that's true!"

THE UNCHANGEABLE GOSPEL.

By the Rev. C. H. SPURGEON.

(Address delivered at Easter Hall on March 14.)

You may be aware that I am reputed to be an individual of specially harsh and ungenial views, and accustomed to great fury of speech. Therefore I intend, that I may say nothing unguarded, to read a passage of Scripture, which may moderate the violence of my zeal. "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another Gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." (Gal. i. 8-9.)

Paul was clearly in an amiable and charitable mood, as I trust I may be. I note, first of all, his declaration, that if "we"—that is to say, himself, or any brother of the apostolic college—preach any other gospel, he pronounces a solemn curse on such, himself included. The lesson is, plainly, we have not to take anything a man says for gospel because he has spoken well and truly at other times. It matters not, even if he be our spiritual father; yet if he preach another gospel, we cannot pronounce him blessed. Further, if an angel preach any other gospel—that is to say, if such teaching should come from a being of the highest degree of intelligence—if one, who sees to the soul of things, were to preach another gospel,—we must still reckon that gospel accursed. An

angel would exhibit extraordinary holiness as well as talent, but this fact would only make the supposed false doctrine the more mischievous. Such and such a man may be holy as well as clever, but if he has departed from the faith once delivered to the saints, we follow him not a step. And though the preacher come as an angel from heaven, come with a new revelation claiming to come directly from the throne, yet we cannot bid him God-speed if he speak not the truth. That is the text for me. I have no wish to go beyond it.

Now I turn to my subject—the unchangeableness of the Gospel. There was a gospel once for all delivered to the saints—delivered to be preserved; the trust is sacred; the deposit is to be guarded with care. We are to live upon it, hold it forth, and scatter it throughout all generations. There was such a Gospel: Jesus Christ distinctly preached something; His apostles preached something distinctly. He did not leave, as it were, a piece of brown paper to be cut out afterwards into any pattern we please. There was a definite Gospel once for all delivered. To make sure work, that Gospel was written. We have just heard stress laid on the words, "It is written," and that stress is a just one. What is written by God cannot be unwritten. When you put a thing down in black and white, it is meant to abide, to remain, to continue. If God had intended a "progressive theology," He would not have given us a book such as this; or if He had, He would have made arrangements for successive editions to be

issued of it. "It is written" means permanence. The *Verba scripta* are for all time. The Gospel stands fast for ever; for "the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." That, some say, belongs to distant times, but the Word of the Lord is for all time. He spoke 2,000 years ago; but what difference can that interval make with the unchanging God? His Word is stereotyped, and unalterable. Say some, it is advancing to perfection. Nay; it has reached perfection, it is perfect, and you cannot go beyond it. Moreover it is sealed in the most solemn manner by its closing words: "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." I regard, therefore, the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to have come to us an absolutely perfect thing, and to be, like the God who has given it, without variableness or shadow of turning. Christ himself shall come and usher in a new dispensation, but till He cometh we hold fast our trust of immutable truth.

I cannot perceive in Scripture any hint made to us of further discoveries improving upon the knowledge of the apostles and those who immediately followed them. I think there should have been some hint, at least, of the marvellous nineteenth century, the most glorious of all ages for progress. If, indeed, such progress was intended. Some hint might have been expected of men who were to have a new revelation, who were to become the centre of new light, bringing in a very millennium. There is a hint of another kind, however. We are warned that "there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts." We receive many and plain intimations of a departure from the faith, but not one hint of clearer knowledge to be imparted of something dimly revealed before. We hear much of Evolution in the natural world, but fail to find instances to support it. The theory may be very clever, but the facts are the other way. Anyhow, Evolution in religion is not hinted at in Holy Scripture. We find that God has spoken, and spoken to us; and we have to receive that which He has spoken. There is no indication that, in the Gospel dispensation, we have received a certain something to be developed by specially cultured intellects. There are denunciations of anything like another gospel, and warnings not to have anything to do with theories born of the wisdom of men. An improved gospel is all very fine for advanced intellect, but the Lord Jesus thanked the Father, saying, "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes." Men have reversed that, and now the wise and prudent are to reveal to us new and wonderful things. The foolishness of preaching may have been all very well at one time—now it won't do. These eminently learned scientists, these wonderfully instructed theologians, have lifted the veil and assured us that the old faith of our fathers is antiquated, and we had better look to modern prophets, and follow their guidance. If so, we are placed under strong temptation to follow and trust men. If the Gospel of God is useless, it is to this new light we must look.

The whole theory leads to the unsettlement of

faith—especially when we come to the inspiration of Scripture. We learn that this part and that part are not inspired, and one hardly knows what we may lean upon. I would suggest that these new teachers would do well to print a new edition of the Bible, with the really trustworthy and inspired portions in black and the doubtful in red. It is rather a serious matter, for some poor soul may be building his hope on some passage which may turn out to be uninspired. How are we to tell? What can we trust? I wonder if "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," is trustworthy? Is that inspired? Many have found their way to God, have rested their soul's salvation on that text; what if it should be uninspired? But then, it is said, "You have in the Bible the speeches of Job's friends, and of the devil himself, and so on; what about these? Are they inspired?" No, but the record of them is. When any one makes such an exceedingly original remark to me, I see at once that I am regarded by him as an idiot, and I am hardly bound to answer him. It is characteristic of "modern thought" to sneer down everybody who differs from it.

We have here an inspired Book, an inspired record throughout. So we regard it. If any portions are unreliable, this had better be understood. A friend of mine bought some coals, but there happened to be a few slates in them; every now and then these would explode and shoot forth from the drawing-room fire. This was unpleasant, and so when he ordered the next lot, he said, "I want coal. I am aware that, according to nature, there must be a certain proportion of slate mixed in the coals; but, if you please, I would prefer the coals put in sacks by themselves, and the slates put in sacks by themselves." So if Scripture is not inspired throughout, it would be well to have it clearly marked, "This is inspired and reliable," and "This is uninspired and unreliable." If a poor man does not know what to believe and what not to believe, it may be a serious thing for him. By all means, let us know which is which. For my own part, I take the Book as inspired and authoritative from beginning to end. I believe that, if we have not an infallible Book, we would be better without any book at all. Can you, for one moment, believe God would puzzle men by giving them a revelation in which they would need continually to distinguish the true from the false? It would not have been a difficult task for Him to separate them, but it would be an impossible task for us.

After all, we have this comfort: the Scripture has been tried in ten thousand ways, and has come out of the furnace as gold seven times refined. In your own experience you have tested this, that, and the other passage of Scripture, never tried by you before, and you have always found it true. You know that the Word of the Lord is true, and you can say:

"My faith can on this promise live,
Can on this promise die."

I am persuaded that the Gospel cannot be changeable, variable, shifting. We cannot have Gospel constructed upon a sliding scale, because it is certain that man has not changed since the days of Christ and His apostles. Men need the Gospel

to-day just as they did then. Human nature is still prone to sin. A few years ago we were startled by the awful revelation of the vice of London, and we found that Sodom and Gomorrah were not of the past, but of the present. A certain missionary read, in India, a portion of Rom. I., when a native observed, "I suppose you have written that since you have been in India and seen Indian life." "Oh, no; it was written a thousand years ago." The truth is, man is still the same: now, as ever, he loves the wages of iniquity. And if man's need and nature have not changed, the Law of God has not changed; what was sinful in the beginning is sinful now; what was right then is right now. That, therefore, which deals with the need of men must still be the same; and that, on the other hand, which meets the demands of the law must be the same. If the atoning sacrifice of Christ was wanted nineteen hundred years ago, that atoning sacrifice is wanted still. If, then, it was true, "without shedding of blood there is no remission," it is so still. Man is still the same, the law is still the same, and for pardon the precious cleansing blood is still required. Still is human nature impotent for good. Still it is true that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit;" for flesh has not improved so that what is born of the flesh may be spirit. Still is it true, just as when it was first spoken, "Ye must be born again." Still, as ever, it wants power from on high to bring men out of darkness into light, out of the carnal into the spiritual realm.

And then death is still the same. Pastor, as I am, of a very large church, I have often to visit the chambers of dying saints as well as dying sinners, and I thank God I have still the same Gospel to preach. How could I tell the dying sinner to do his duty, that he might be saved by his works? What can he do? Life is closing. When I come down from dying saints I thank God that I have never heard one of them express in death discontent with the old Gospel. They may employ different words and express themselves in various ways, but the rest of faith is with them all. One will say:

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling."

Another will cry:

"Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes,
Shine through the gloom and point me to the
skies."

But, however the expressions vary, all are resting on the all-sufficient atonement made by blood.

For these reasons our faith is still the same. Of it we can say, "As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be." So let me live, and so let me die, even as saints and martyrs have done before me.

Moreover, you and I, dear friends, believe that heaven and hell have not changed. Notwithstanding all the remedial measures of modern sympathy, hell remains just as terrible to the sinner, and heaven just as blissful to the saint.

Jesus Christ himself is still "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." The great Father is still the same: the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is my God, and I worship Him as Abraham did. And the blessed Spirit is still the same; still, as ever, He testifies of Christ. All these facts

remaining as they were, I see no room for change in the Gospel.

Notice, again, that, as Canon Girdlestone has so well said, truth is still and must always remain the same. What was God's truth a thousand or ten thousand years ago is God's truth still. If a thing is so, it is so; lapse of time does not alter it. If we have established a fact by truthful witnesses, it is a fact for ever. If Christ died for our sins and rose again, according to the Scriptures, that remains true. No matter how many did not see it, those who did see it have proved it. You remember the Irishman's defence, "You have brought two persons who saw me do this theft; but I can bring fifty who did not see me do it." Just so some men talk. There are always books or records which do not mention the facts of our holy faith; but if the things occurred, the omission to mention them does not alter the facts.

But the demand of this age is for an advance, for something fresh and new. But truth does not advance. No doubt, for example, we have made a great advance in mathematics—a great advance in many ways; but it remains just as true as ever it did—that two and two make four. The fundamental facts, on which mathematics rest, stand fixed and unalterable. And so the fundamental truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ remain fixed. Just as no amount of mathematical calculations will not displace the elementary facts of arithmetic, so no amount of thought can disprove that it is, and always has been, true. Truth must ever be the same, though men may go beyond it, as, alas! many have done.

But, further, this Gospel is unchangeable, because it was and is sufficient for all the purposes for which God sent it in old time. The old, old story of Jesus and His love has been taken among a barbarous people, and they have heard and believed that Jesus lived and died for them: the results you know. What those results were eighteen hundred years ago, they are to-day. When Wesleyans carry the Gospel to Fiji, or Congregationalists bear it to the South Sea Isles, the same signs follow it. They tell us, then, our enlightened population in our advanced age must be treated in a new way. We must have a philosophical Gospel for a philosophical generation. Must you? Take them for all in all, I fancy the Greek sages were equal, man for man, to the gentlemen of the present period. I question very much if we have men of larger mind, and greater capacity, now than existed at the time when Christianity appeared. Yet the Gospel was a match for them all. Gnosticism and subtle philosophy found their Gordian knots cut by the Gospel. The Athenian fore runners of those who say to-day, "You must think, and keep on thinking—only thus can you become a man," have been put to rout by the Gospel. The grandest intellects the world has ever known have been conquered by the simple teaching of the Cross. You of the modern school may quote and quote great names till you are tired, but we can match them all by referring to those who have stood by the old Gospel, and whose names will live while time shall last. The Gospel of the grace of God is strong enough to produce the noblest character, and subdue the vilest vice. I only wish it were preached more simply and believingly. Certain brethren believe the Gospel in their hearts, but they do not preach it with their lips. I can understand a man not believing it, and therefore not preaching it; but

how a man can believe it and yet not preach it is beyond me. There is in such a case a grave responsibility. If you believe the old truths which the Word of God declares, then out with them in God's name; especially since your secretly believing it will save no soul but your own, and scarcely that, if you do not believe it enough to preach it.

It is God's Word that does the saving work, but we need to give the people more of it than we do. There is a good story told of Cæsar Malan, that grand old man with strongly-marked idiosyncrasies. On one occasion, going from Boulogne to Paris in the diligence, he pulled out his Bible and began to read it aloud. A Frenchman in the conveyance strongly objected, and Mr. Malan's friend so far sympathized with him, that he urged that, as the gentleman objected, and did not believe in the authority of the Book, it would be better first to prove the authority of the Book and then to read it. "When you have a good sword," replied Malan, "you do not first prove that it is a sword, and then fight, but you prove it a good sword by fighting." So he went on reading. That evening, when he and his friend were supping, the waiter came in and asked if they were going to Paris in the morning, as the French gentleman was anxious to ride again with Mr. Malan. That objector was converted, and afterwards became a communicant in this godly man's church. The Scripture alone had convinced him. It is the Word of God that does the work. I wish ministers would use Scripture more than they do. God's Word, not man's comment on God's work, is the power of God unto salvation. I usually find, when admitting converts, that they attribute their conversion to some text I quoted and not to anything I said. Keep to the old faith, the old Gospel; it is equal to all purposes.

When I think of what the Gospel used to do I admire it; when I think of what it now does I trust it. It is still the same. We read the story of Diocletian's persecutions, and marvel at the glorious endurance of men and women; but we turn to the narrative of Bishop Hannington and the converts of Central Africa, and we find the same martyr spirit. So the story of the persecution in Madagascar reads just like the story of persecution shortly after the Master went to heaven.

The Gospel has still the same elevating character—it is equal to all the demands upon it. Still it can raise the vilest from the lowest depths to the right hand of God. Nothing else can uplift the fallen as it does. Instead of the wooden sword of "modern thought," bring out the true Jerusalem blade, and you will cut through joints and marrow.

Furthermore, the Gospel has the same power of creating enthusiasm as it had when Luther began to preach, and the crowds gathered to his call. When the Gospel of Jesus Christ is plainly, heartily, earnestly preached, it stirs men's inmost souls. There is a great and charming novelty about it still. It is said that a certain French king, hearing of a preacher who was drawing great crowds, asked, "What is he preaching?" The answer was, "Sir, he is preaching a great novelty—the Gospel." An aged saint being asked what he was reading, said: "I am reading the news." Truly the Bible is the best news that ever came to earth. Nothing stirs the souls of men like the Gospel of God's grace. It is, therefore, sufficient for all purposes for which God gave it.

The modern alterations are no improvement, but much the reverse. I notice that preachers who improve the Gospel seldom display joy and delight themselves, or stir enthusiasm in others. "Does it make you happy?" I asked one. The reply was, "There is nothing in what I preach to make anybody happy." Joy has all gone when truth is gone. They prove and prove, and disprove and argue, but get no joy out of it. I contrast such with the old preachers we used to hear. How they enjoyed it! How their faces beamed, as they brought forth the fat things full of marrow! How they warmed up, as they declared the glad tidings! The great Master gave them meat to eat from His own tables, and fed the preacher as well as the people. The great truth of the covenant, the doctrines of free grace and dying love, how they gloried in them! What a contrast to the soullessness of much preaching to-day! That witty man, Tom Hood, said to a clergyman who looked miserable: "Sir, I don't think your religion agrees with you;" and so would I say to the new apostles. Our religion agrees with us, is as to us a well-spring of joy and delight, and we shall not depart from it or let it go.

Furthermore, there is no improved Gospel needed. Nothing requires to be amended in the revelation of our God. Our opponents hoped much from the labours of a band of godly and learned men who were set to revise the Scriptures; a marvellous change was to be effected by the Revised Version; but somehow or other, if it is no great improvement on the old, it is not worse for us. We find all the old doctrines in it. We have lost nothing, but have rather gained. At any rate, it is a distinct gain to get help towards an accurate translation. The Revision has offered no basis for an improved Gospel.

But there is a demand for improvement, because of modern science. There is no force in this, for no one fact of science is contrary to the Gospel. Of course we hear that science upsets the Gospel; it is the fashion to talk about science somehow or other disproving the Bible. The idea is in the air everywhere. It is mere talk. Mark this: the God who wrote the Bible knew all that science would ever find out. "Known unto the Lord from the beginning are all His works." He who knew all things knew what he wrote; nothing is new to Him. He did not give us the Bible to teach us science, nor did He adapt its language to our new discoveries; if He had done so, I wonder what the people of former days would have made of it. Some thoughtful men have believed that all the great scientific discoveries are really in the Bible, and I would far rather agree with their notion than imagine that the Author of Holy Scripture can have erred in speaking of His own works. Of this, however, I am sure, that there is nothing really ascertained by science which is in conflict with the Bible. Suppose we adopt the new notion, and adapt our preaching to science; where are we to stop? We should have to study the daily papers and take in an evening paper as well, for we could never tell when an alteration was coming. If you want to see a picture of the vagaries of the scientific, read *Kitcher-bocker's* (New York). There you will find an opening chapter, of a witty description, of the various ways of making a world—according to the speculations of science. There appear to be so many ways that the author remarks, "It

seems an easier thing to make a world than one might have thought." The history of science is laughable; the personal of it is enough to make us great unbelievers in the theories of the learned. God's Word cannot be against true science, for He who made the world knows all about the world, and how He made it. The fact is, the more one knows of the history of philosophy, the more he will be convinced that it is the history of human folly. You might think, in reading the many theories of philosophy, that you were reading the story of Bethlehem Hospital, and not the narrative of the opinions of some men. There is plenty of insanity about, but the worst of all insanities are these new notions about the Gospel. There are moral as well as mental insanities, and are therefore the more dangerous; we meet them with God's pure truth. God has spoken; "let God be true, and every man a liar."

The alterations proposed by different persons are dangerous in themselves. Every attempt to improve the Gospel leaves a door open for error to come in. For instance, just now, there comes in—what? Why, one of the oldest of all errors; one we thought dead and buried long ago. Nothing less than Purgatory, to which the doctrine of salvation after death infallibly leads. Strange that ancient superstition and modern Rationalism have swung round to the same point. If men are to be saved in the world to come, if by some process sin is to be purged away and forgiven after death, then we have reached the Romish doctrine of Purgatory. And if so, the next and natural step is to pray for the dead. It must be so; if they are within the reach of grace, they are within the reach of prayer. It is our duty to pray for all those for whom there is a possibility of pardon. Having gone so far, it will not take many years to bring about payment to those who pray for the dead; it will be a convenient method of raising salaries. So we may yet have a new Tetzel with his indulgences. The drift is that way. Thus the last error we should have expected to see resurrected is set up again—the Purgatory of long ago is open again.

Alteration is dangerous. As the letter read from Lord Polwarth states, modern thought is opening the way for materialism and infidelity.

The idea of improving the Gospel must lead to multiplied sects. Every man may improve in his own way if there be no final authority, and so there may be a sect for every man. Our hope of union lies in coming back to Christ, and to what He has taught by Himself and by His apostles. God grant we may all come back to His Holy Word! Such a meeting as this of Christians of many sects is a happy omen. On the basis of the one flock, let us return to "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." If we grasp the whole truth in the power and love of it, while retaining our personal convictions on minor points, we shall be united, despite our diversity; and our union will manifest to the world with distinctness our conviction that the truth, which we hold and obey in common, is the first and chief matter. We dare not seek that sort of union which would mean the inauguration of general indifference to truth. "There is some difference," says an American, "between truth and falsehood, between single truths and their contradictories, and between two systems of religious doctrine which affirm, the one one thing and the other its opposite. This may

seem quite too plain to need to be stated, and yet even this is denied, explicitly by many, implicitly by more. Those who deny would admit that to most men there seems to be a difference, just as the same object seen by different observers sometimes seems not to be one and the same, but to each observer appears other than to the rest. The difference is therefore apparent, not real; is 'in the eye,' not in the object. The great religious controversies in the past which have shaken kingdoms, and even threatened at times to shake to pieces the very earth itself, all went upon this delusion, that there is a difference between systems of doctrine, and that one may be true and another false, and that the false is not the true, nor the true the false. The philosophical mass of all sects and religions is still subject to this same delusion, and hence the old strife continues. But the good time is coming when all will see that each has all along seen and believed just what all the rest saw and believed, and then strife will cease. Men of old schools and new schools, and all schools of all religions and theologies, Christian and anti-Christian, will all before long come together in a General Pan-Indifferent Assembly, to shake hands together over the imaginary gulfs of past and present separation, and to draw up and promulgate the new confession of faith: to wit, that the old confessions are all confessions, not of diverse systems of doctrine, but of one and the same system diversely conceived, and that the only confession that has any distinct truth for its object, and any imperative value for life, is this ultimate confession of indifference. We seem to be moving toward such a magnificent climax. But there is just one obstacle in the way: God has made man in His own image; so that reason in man answers to reason in God; and when such infamous nonsense demands distinct recognition and adoption, the spirit of man, inspired by the Spirit of God, spits and stamps upon it, and kicks it out of the universe." White is not black, and black is not white; the false is not true, and the true is not false. But here lies the great danger that people may come to think it is so.

Every supposed improvement in doctrine tends to actual laxness in morals. Let the Gospel be despised, let faith in the Gospel become feeble, and strength to resist evil decays. Men begin to do with a scared conscience what they dared not do when truth kept them tender. The theatre is frequented when the Gospel is questioned.

God help us to know the truth, to love it and to live it, to proclaim it and enjoy it. There is a story of Waterloo, whether it be true or not I know not. It is said that a regiment was being pounded by the French, and an officer rode up to the Iron Duke and craved help. The Duke's reply was, "Stand firm." He gave the commander's message to the men, and they stood firm. By-and-bye the men began to say, "We shall all be destroyed by this cannonade." Again the officer galloped to the Duke, and again the reply was, "Stand firm." "Men," he said, returning to his regiment, "we are to stand firm." They stood firm, and left their bodies on the field; but the victory was won. The order for us to-day from the Captain of our salvation is, "Stand firm." "Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

By the Rev. Canon FLEMING, M.A., D.D.

(Address delivered at Exeter Hall on March 14.)

This is the most solemn and clinching part of all that has come before our minds to-day. It is the key which turns the lock of God's truth, His precious Gospel, and fixes it indelibly upon the heart and soul, firmer than in the rock, for ever. We are living in days when men are talking a great deal about power, and are coveting power. The Christian should covet spiritual power. The prophet of old said, "Truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord." There, I think, we have the secret of all true power: the power of faith, the power of love, the power of prayer—all are set before us there. It was true language for the prophet to use; it was not too strong for the prophet, and is not too strong for us to-day.

Now the Bible is God's Book for all His children, at all times, in all nations. We have no novelties to bring you now. You have heard none, and I have none to introduce. I can only speak a closing fragment of that Gospel which has been set before you. Whatever churches we represent, whatever may be the cry for something new, we can, I trust, put our hands upon the Bible, and say, "The old is better." Faith is still the same; it is God's great power to-day. You have only to read the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews to see what it was in the olden times, and what the heroes did then. We have the same faith now. Prayer also is the same, and it is all linked to the work of the Holy Spirit. Prayer moves God, because it moves the arm that rules the world. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him!" Love also remains the same as in the Book of the God of Love. It is the strongest power in the world to-day. Love will melt the heart when no other power can touch it. Unless we are inspired by God with His love, and have sympathy with Him and with the souls around us, we shall never be instrumental in saving souls. We have all need of this power to-day. A man has gone down for want of love; he has drifted away, and thought that no one cared for him because he cared for nobody. Many a man, too, has been saved through this love, which is but a dim reflection of the love of God. "When we were yet without strength, Christ died for the ungodly." Scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet, nevertheless, peradventure, here or there, now and then, say, in the history of the world, for a good man some would even dare to die. "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." This wealth of love, this wealth of faith, this wealth of prayer, is all ours by that power which the prophet spoke of—the power of the Holy Ghost.

We do not despise intellect, we do not despise learning, we do not despise wealth. All these must have their place, and will have their place without us, whether we will or no. But none of these can take the place of the work of the Holy Spirit. Some think these truths respecting God's Spirit are not wanted now. This is such a refined age, such a different period from the times of old, there is such progress and power

now, that we must guide the intellect, the reason, the head! These people seem to leave out the heart, but God never does so. The Bible tells us that Christ came to save the fallen and rebellious heart of man. The head and intellect, and wealth and learning, will all take their places when the heart's needs are attended to; and then we shall have a redeemed body as well as a redeemed soul.

It takes more than eloquence to re-create a soul. Nothing less than the power and work of the Holy Spirit can do that; and the man who tries to save a soul, apart from the work of the Holy Spirit upon the word spoken, and written, and read, will certainly be baffled and defeated. This is the great want of the Church to-day. It is, indeed, for the lack of this that the Gospel has not brought the world to the feet of Christ. All churches want this: the ministry wants it. Some say we want an educated ministry. Yea, but we also want a ministry "full of power by the Spirit of the Lord." This is what the laity also want. We want to see sons and daughters better than their fathers and mothers have been; but unless we have this power, we shall not find the children better than those who went before them.

All through my ministry I have laboured for Christian union. The power and work of the Holy Spirit upon our hearts is the only and the strongest bond of union. True union among the churches of God is a thing possible, but no vague holding of any creed will unite men together. The affinity of sanctified hearts is what will draw men more and more together. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." I do not despair, because the world is growing older, of yet seeing more of that which we now represent and pray for. All who by the Holy Spirit are being made more like the Lord Jesus Christ are being drawn together, whether they know it or not, whether they admit it or not. In a naval war between England and France, two ships came into action in the dead of the night. It seemed in the darkness that neither would conquer, and when the day dawned it was found that they were friends and not enemies. So it is that we come out of the darkness; and as we meet to-day we see that we are not enemies, but friends—that we are not defeated, but bound together. And I say that, if there is anything in this world that will tend to do this, even if we are not to live to see it done,—if anything will bind the Churches of Christ together, with all their imperfections, deficiencies, and squabbings,—it is not to be creeds, nor, indeed, platforms like this, nor organizations; certainly not politics, and not nationalities; but what is here spoken of—the one true, uniting, cementing power of the Holy Spirit, which leaves each distinct as the billows, but shows them one like the sea. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing."

ADDRESSES AT THE AFTERNOON MEETING, EXETER HALL, MARCH 14.

THE HOLY SPIRIT: A WITNESS.

By the Rev. F. B. MITER, B.A., Regent's Park Chapel.

There is no word in which we join more often than in the sentence, "I believe in the Holy Ghost." With many, however, it is merely a form; and were they to make a frank confession it would be "We have not so much as heard whether there be a Holy Ghost." Now it is our desire to accentuate to-day the personality and reality of the Second Person of the blessed Trinity.

Now we must not forget we are living on this side the day of Pentecost. What does this imply? Before that day the Holy Spirit was reserved for the few, the *élite*, the spiritual aristocracy; now it is the blessed heritage of all who believe. We all of us may receive the fulness of the blessed Spirit.

But what for? Our Lord Jesus Christ told us the Spirit should be sent down to bear witness to Himself. It is a remarkable fact that in the present dispensation the Holy Ghost never reveals His own presence. Hence it is the Church has almost forgotten Him. The only way by which He makes known His presence is by the exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ. You know you have received the Holy Ghost when Jesus becomes inexpressibly precious to you. When a church is bearing witness for Christ, when His name is to be as ointment poured forth, then is the Spirit manifested. Thus is provision made that, however recumbent the Church may become, there never will be lacking one voice, one agent, to maintain unimpaired the glory of Jesus Christ. You remember how the apostles before the tribunal referred to this: "We are witnesses to these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him." And this witness-bearing has been continuous from that time until now. Therefore it is the book of the Acts of the Apostles is unfinished, because that book is only the commencement of the work of the Holy Ghost in the Church and in the world.

The first thing the Holy Ghost bears witness to is our Lord's miraculous conception and birth. He is doing so to-day. I was told lately, by a leading scientist of our land, that the marvellous birth of our Lord is a wonderful illustration of the first introduction of life into this world by the great Life-giver. And do we not see the Holy Spirit expanding that life, giving fresh illustrations of it in the conversion and quickening of every new-born disciple? When through faith in the Son of God we receive the new birth and are born into the family of God, is it not a fact that Christ is born into our hearts? Born by the same power of that same Holy Ghost who overshadowed the Virgin Mary. If, therefore, every new disciple is born again by the Holy Spirit, is it not amongst the abiding evidences of the personal work of the Holy Ghost amongst men?

Then the Holy Spirit bears witness to the marvellous life of the Lord Jesus. We talk of that life, but do we know that so marvellous is it that sceptics and infidels have conspired to extol it? Now the Lord Jesus Himself constantly attributed His own excellences and graces to the work of the Holy Ghost. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me." So we read again and again in the record of His life and ministry of the Spirit being in Him and on Him. And is it not so still? Day by day, as we meet saintly men and saintly women, do we

not realize their saintliness is not of themselves, but is the operation of the Holy Ghost? Thus is He doing still in human hearts the work that in some marvellous way He did at the first dawn of the Church's history. Thus, in some sense, the life that Jesus Christ lived years and years ago on earth is being reproduced; and in His members, by the power of the Holy Spirit, His person and work are still represented on earth.

Then there is another great fact to which the Holy Ghost bears witness—the substitutionary work of the Lord Jesus Christ. There are in its mysteries we cannot fathom. It is revealed to babes coming into the kingdom, as by some flash of intuition; but to understand it baffles the most learned.

Yet we seem to understand that Christ put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, bearing our curse and setting us free from the law. How do we understand this? By the explanation of teachers, the discourses of ministers? Not always or fully. Words cannot set forth this ineffable mystery. The truth is, the Holy Ghost brings to the heart and conscience a true apprehension of what Christ has done. Here, again, you have the personal work of the Holy Spirit.

And once again He bears witness to our Lord's resurrection and ascended glory. Just as the waggon made old Jacob understand that Joseph, his son, was yet alive, so the gift of the Holy Spirit made the disciples understand that their Lord had ascended to the Father. The promised gift of the Holy Spirit proved His exaltation to the right hand of the Father on high. But these gifts are continued; they are being wrought to-day in the cultured as well as the uneducated, in the gifts of pastors, and teachers, and evangelists; in the cultivated pastor and the simple tract distributor or visitor, as well as in the highly gifted apologist. From whom do these come? From the Holy Spirit. And is this not an evidence and witness of His person?

And yet again He bears witness to the Second Advent of our Lord and Master. That glorious hope could not have survived till now (through the protracted age elapsing), it would have died out, had it not been kept alive, and, after burning low, been fanned into flame during the past few years by the Holy Spirit. Every revival of the Church, every awakening of the house of God's elect, has been due to the personal work of the Holy Spirit. And if it be so, is not all this testimony to the risen life and power and Deity and kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ an evidence of the personality of the Holy Ghost?

And now thank God so great a movement has been originated against unevangelical teaching. One cannot but attribute it to something more than the zeal and energy of man, however devoted and faithful they may be; surely we must see in it the work and agency of the Holy Spirit, who has made the truths assailed, or being slurred over, stand out accentuated before the Church and the world. Let us, then, trust in the personal work of the Holy Ghost. Let us adore Him for His converting work in every new convert, for His repeating the life of Jesus on earth in His members, for His revealing the mystery of the Atonement, for His witness to the rising again and ascended glory of Jesus, and for His keeping us in mind of His coming again.

"WITNESSES UNTO ME."

By the Rev. E. W. MOORE, M.A., Vicar of Emmanuel Church, Wimbledon.

"Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me." Ye see your calling in Jesus Christ. We are called to witness to Him; and to this we are called, not only in conference to-day, not only in our holy gatherings, but also from day to day. We are left on earth for this great purpose, that whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we may be witnesses for Him. We are to represent our absent Lord on earth, even as He condescends to represent us in heaven. What a calling! we are ready to exclaim. We are like to sink at its height, and to say, "It is too high for me, I cannot attain it." Poor miserable caricatures we too often have been, instead of representatives of Him and witnesses for Him.

Now a word or two as to the essential qualifications for a witness. The distinction has often been drawn between a witness and a pleader, a witness and an advocate. The advocate is called to defend causes, to master an argument, to skilfully plead; but, after all, his object may be altogether defeated by the simple testimony of a witness. The witness does not argue; he bears testimony to a fact he has seen or heard. The power of the simple testimony of witnesses has often succeeded where the best arguments of advocates have failed. I may recall an illustration from the gold fields. Skilled experts had declared there was gold in a certain district, but no one was stirred. At length some shepherd boys came into Melbourne having with them stones containing gold. It does not appear they knew the value of these stones; but they stated there was plenty like them in the district in which they tended their flocks. This was enough; and by the next day everybody who could get away was off to the gold field. Many instances might also be cited from the law courts illustrating the power of simple testimony.

Now what is wanted is that we should be witnesses for Jesus Christ. When opposed by the subtle arguments of sceptics and rationalists, can we say: "What we have seen and heard declare we unto you? We have not followed cunningly-devised fables, but have been witnesses of these things." The man who can say, "I was there, I saw it," silences the best pleader. If it was so, it was so. Are we declaring what we have seen and heard? Are we in the position of the apostles who declared before the council: "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." To witness thus is the privilege and responsibility of every one of us. Every one who has been touched by the Spirit of Christ is responsible to witness for his Master.

Our brother has just indicated the truth to which we witness. But just observe, it is to a Person we testify: "Witnesses unto me." We are here to-day as witnesses to fundamental truth, but all things fundamental have their centre in the person of Jesus Christ. "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid in Christ Jesus." Living witnesses to a living Lord—these are the men who, in all time, have turned the world upside down. And we are responsible for this same task; to us is committed the trust of witnessing to a living Christ.

Here, then, is our work; but where is the power? In order to do all this, we need the

power of the Holy Ghost. But, remember, the command so to witness carries the promise of power. All God's commands are enabling. There are different sorts of power. Knowledge is power, but we may have much knowledge without being witnesses for Christ. Those men to whom He spake were ignorant, unlearned men; they had not knowledge in any scholastic sense. Then money is power; but these men had neither silver nor gold. Money can achieve many things; but the Kingdom of Christ will not be extended by that power, though it can be turned to good purpose in proper hands. Then there is force of arms; this is a great power. The Romans had a great idea of this power; and so, perhaps, have many of us to-day. The "Powers of Europe" is only another term for the nations which can throw great armies into the field.

But these men had neither knowledge, riches, nor force of arms. What, then, was their power? "Ye shall receive power," was the promise of the risen Lord. When? How? "After that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." The Holy Ghost, then, is power. Men question the very existence and personality of the Holy Ghost, and are we not somewhat to blame for this? Has the world seen that power manifested in us? Ought it not to see it in our lives? Remember the remarkable expression, "The Gospel which was preached unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." Do we so preach? The truth will not carry conviction home to the hearts of men without the Holy Ghost. The deepest need of the Church to-day is the power of the Spirit of God.

But mark what their power was. It was not regenerating power. These men had been born again, and were already followers of Jesus. It was not miracle-working power; for all were not miracle-workers who received the Holy Ghost. Even those who wrought miracles were exhorted to covet earnestly the best gift; and that gift is shown to be love. The power of the Holy Spirit coming on the believer is the power of the Church to-day; but, while we try to ascertain its character, do we seek the power itself? You remember on the Pentecostal day they received a baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire. Now mark what fire is, and wherefore fire.

Fire melts; so the Holy Ghost melts the hardest hearts, softens the stubborn will, that our life and witness may be just what He desires it to be.

Fire glows. You expect your fire at home to glow, you want heat. So our Lord rebukes those who are neither cold nor hot. He would have us glow with warm fervour in our heart and in the Church.

Fire consumes. And do we not need the consuming power of fire of the Holy Ghost in our lives and characters? How much of worthless dross there is! Look at these men called to the mightiest task ever man had to meet. Who were they? A few Galilean fishermen and peasants. And these were against the world. Look at their past characters, and reflect how they needed the consuming fire to cleanse away all that would hinder or mar their usefulness.

Fire illumines. This is not wild-fire; it is intended to give light. Did these men give light? See how Peter understood and expounded the Scriptures. What a change from a little while

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before, when he misunderstood these things! So the Holy Ghost illumines; illumines Scripture to us, and illumines us, and shines for Christ.

Again, we ascend. As we sing—

"Rivers to the ocean run,
Nor stay in all their course;
Fire, ascending, seeks the sun;
Both spend them to their source.
So a soul, new-born of God,
Finds to view His glorious face,
Upwards tends to His abode,
To rest in His embrace."

If that heavenly flame, melting, glowing, consuming and illuminating, come upon you, then your heart and soul will go up to God, you will dwell with God, and witness for God.

I close with a prayer familiar to many of us: "Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that like as we do believe Thy only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to have ascended into the heavens; so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend, and with Him continually dwell, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen."

THE ETERNAL SON OF GOD.

By the Rev. E. E. JENKINS, M.A., Wesleyan Missionary Society.

(Address delivered at Exeter Hall on March 14.)

I shall not introduce the subject, allotted to me, in a theological manner. I believe Christ to be the Eternal Son of God, not only because I consider the doctrine to be clearly and abundantly taught in the Holy Scriptures, but for this reason also, because I cannot conceive of a Teacher for all the ages, a Leader of all the races, and a Deliverer from all evils having no other attributes than those which are common to us all. If Christ is merely human, He is simply one of several philosophic and religious founders of renown. He belongs to an age; He is a member of a race; and His wisdom is a contribution to that vast treasury of thought, knowledge, and instruction to which many minds in many languages, and at different times, have given the wealth of their researches. But we claim for Christ that He is not one of many, but One over all; and in demanding for Him this position we affirm that the human race cannot be regenerated by the wise men that belong to it. The men that flourish to-day in the republic of science and letters are certainly not wiser than the sages of other days. It cannot be denied that science has increased their knowledge of natural laws, and that the material conditions of the human race are more widely and accurately understood now than at any former time. It cannot be denied that we are masters of forces, of which our fathers never dreamed. But these advantages have not increased the wisdom which addresses itself, by teaching and by efforts, to the moral needs of humanity. They have not increased among us moral power. Modern knowledge has not sent one ray of light into the region of human destiny. It has not improved either the clearness or the force of any one of those motives which lead to righteousness. I am bold to say that it lends us no help whatever in the fight that is waged between conscience and passion. I dare affirm that it is not in the power of any intellectual acquirement, or of any degree of training, to make us better men. And as for the labours of science have added nothing, the records of the past offer no encouragement to hope for anything more cheerful than new variations of failure. He who proves to me that there is no God in the world makes it equally clear that there is no hope for the world. But I believe there is hope for the world. I cannot bring myself even to imagine that man, the grandest product of the creation, is destined merely to indicate vast capacity, and to be always destitute of the power of using and perfecting it; for

when your learning has done everything it can for a man, it leaves untouched those great sentiments which more than any other define the human being. There are aspirations and emotions, which our philosophic teachers imagine they get rid of by calling them the errors of feeling and the material of superstition. But to discredit an emotion is not to get rid of it. To draw a map of human nature, and to mark desert over a vast unvisited province, does not prove the barrenness of the country, but the ignorance of the geographer.

The sentiments to which I refer are not the abstractions of the metaphysician, or the dreams of the recluse. They are familiarly associated with common life; sometimes they are the motives of duty, at other times the sources of sorrow; and not unfrequently they are the inspirations of strength and nobleness. They characterize no race, they are the possession of all races; they are the heritage of man. No human provision has satisfied their needs, because no human exposition of them has made them intelligible. Human treatment of human needs is wanting in these three qualities—knowledge, authority, and sympathy. But I have hope for the world, for these are found in Christ; because Christ is man, and more than man. I open the pages that portray His life, and transmit His doctrines, and human nature, which to the modern thinker is a sealed book, is unrolled before me: the account is complete, and the handwriting intelligible.

The universality of human wickedness, which has been the standing puzzle of moralists, is made clear at once by the doctrine of hereditary alienation from God: those wonderful contrasts in man, of grandeur and meanness, of the angel and the devil, of lofty purpose and ignoble failure, of better things in the hope, and found nowhere else than in the hope,—these are explicable and reconciled in a nature that has fallen from a high estate. When Christ claims to be the Sent of God to bring the race back to that estate, is not that claim supported by the desperate need of the race, and also by the fact that the labours of all other teachers in this direction have been, and continue to be, a failure? They have not been without result; nay, in some instances they have been widely beneficial. But they have failed to penetrate the sources, to touch the roots, of the hereditary disease of the mind. They have been wanting in comprehensiveness, in thoroughness, and even in local efficacy. Let us take this proposition that there is no help for

man is man, and place it beside the claim of Christ to be more than man.

"The bread of God is He which cometh down out of heaven, and giveth life unto the world" (John vi. 33). "I am the Bread of Life." "The word was with God, and the word was God." "And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." And when we examine His sayings and measure, to the extent of our measuring rod, the standard, of His life, and see that standard rise beyond all ideal gradations of excellence, outstripping the furthest glance of the imagination, and when we behold the purpose of His life consummated in sacrifice, do not all these features of the Christ harmonize the position He claims for Himself, and naturally follow it?

And here let me mention the remarkable fact that the teaching, the life, and the death of Christ have commanded a profound attention, and, I had almost said, equal admiration in nearly every school of thinkers. But there is something equally remarkable; I mean the strange inconsistency between their devout admiration for His character and the verdict they pass upon His pretensions. They offer Him intellectual homage; they quote His wisdom, and reverence His career. They give Him the highest place among the benefactors of mankind. But they are critics, not disciples. They study Him with canons of probability and assent. They take care that nothing of Him and nothing from Him shall be accepted which does not agree with what they conceive to be the laws and conditions of nature. The miracle is impossible; the testimony of the miracle is therefore invalid. How do they know that the miracle is impossible? Have they attained that vast knowledge of the forces and movements that are in operation outside their system which can justify the enormous assumption that a miracle is impossible? They confess that Christ is infinitely above them in the knowledge of the human heart, in purity of life, in original grandeur of character, and yet they sit down to study His history, the facts, the discourses, and the events of His life, with the coolness of a reader of proofs, and put their pen through this passage because it is a myth, through that commandment because it is an antiquated superstition, through the other statement because it violates probability. And when their work is done, what do they leave us? A Christ reduced to their own stature, a piece of modelling and warwork. We will have the original Christ, or none! Away with these critics who know exactly what Christ ought to be and what Christ ought to mean! Christ is His own interpreter, and He will make it plain. You confess that He manifests the profoundest insight into our nature; then why do you reject His testimony when He speaks of His own nature? If His wisdom is faultless when He teaches within the range of the natural, why should He not be equally free from error when He reveals the supernatural? Those who applaud the

Sermon on the Mount as the deepest exposition of the laws of conduct, and as displaying the purest pattern after which a man can build up his life, are bound in all consistency to accept the passage of another discourse, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life." If Christianity has done a noble service for mankind, has it been done by a Christ criticised, or by a Christ followed? What is the secret of that spell or charm which invests the proclamation of the Gospel, which makes the common people hear it gladly, which makes its invitations music to the weary and heavy laden, to the poor, the sorrowful, and the dying? The very mysteries which these critics would discredit (!); the sympathy, the power, the presence, and the personality of the Son of God; the promised peace of an atoning sacrifice; the rest from guilt, from doubt, from fear, not in a proposition, a statement, a community, but the rest of faith in a risen Christ.

There are several gospels preached in this city of London. Which of them commands the largest following? Which attracts for its preachers the largest congregation? Which brings the new heart to the hearer? Which brings a new life into the family? Which brings order, quietness, and sobriety into the neighbourhood? Not "another gospel," but the old gospel: the Gospel which was not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead! As one who has visited many countries, and studied many religions, let me be permitted to say, and I am thankful for this opportunity of affirming it, that the triumph of this Gospel is its ethical power, and its ethical power is born of its mysteries. Strip it of these, and its glory departs with them. Talk not of the wisdom and poetry of its literature,—the Aryan and Greek Muse can furnish the sublimest strains of prudence and devotion. Talk not of the ascendancy of Jesus,—the authority connected with that ascendancy and the adoration and obedience inspired by it, perish when you make Him less than God. As for stripping the Gospel of its mysteries, it looks absurd even in the assumption of an argument. The chemist may change the constituent elements of air, but he only affects the atmosphere of his laboratory, while the unchanged air outside continues to give life to millions; and the critic in his study can eliminate the divine from his local text, but the breath of God holds on its way, sweeping over the wastes of humanity to make humanity rise up and live!

I will conclude with what Charles Wesley said, who was not unacquainted with the dangers which we have to meet to-day:

"Should all the forms which men devise
Assault my faith with treacherous art,
I'd call them vanity and lies,
And bind Thy Gospel to my heart."

"THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE BELIEVER."

By the Rev. HENDLEY G. G. MOULE, M.A., Ridley Hall, Cambridge.

(Address delivered at Exeter Hall on March 14.)

It has been laid on me to say something this evening concerning the Lord Jesus Christ as our Righteousness. It is a solemn

charge. One of the first duties, one of the deepest, instincts of the Christian, in face of any great truth concerning his Lord and Re-

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dearer, and especially in face of such truths as pointedly remind him of his own character as a sinner saved by grace, surely is to veil the face of his soul, to bow down in inward awe and adoration, and humbly to ask of the holy King and Master such grace and guidance as that the man may in some sense truly set Him forth. So I not only announce my subject and proceed to deal with it; I desire to ask your prayers, to beg you to accompany me in prayer, remembering Him of whom we come to speak, and who looks and listens as we confer together about Him. Let me, by way of immediate introduction now to this holy subject, read just two verses of the Word of God: 1 John ii. 1, 2, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the Propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." The passage is brief, but divinely full. Within its sacred limits will move almost all the thoughts and reasons that I shall have to put before you.

In pondering my subject, I have earnestly sought to do two things—to consider its limits, and to simplify my treatment. To speak first of this last point, I desire to aim at simplicity of treatment, by aiming at the heart and centre of the subject, and not at accessories and details on which there may be room for discussion, and certain variations among believers otherwise thoroughly agreed. My brief address will concentrate itself, God helping, only and wholly upon some few great facts and considerations, which to me seem to constitute that heart and centre. And then, to speak of the limits of the subject, I wish to remember, and I ask you to remember, that in the phrase, "Christ our righteousness," as commonly understood among Evangelical Christians, we have not only the doctrine of the atonement implied: we have a certain special aspect and application of that holy doctrine. Disengaged from detail, in the way I hinted at a moment ago, the truth of "Christ our righteousness" may, as to its centre, be stated somewhat thus: Jesus Christ in His atoning merits, Jesus Christ for me a sinner, is my immediate ground, is my one real ground, of peace with God, not only at first, but always, to the end. For His blessed sake as my sinless sacrifice of peace, I, believing, am welcomed to the refuge, to the hiding-place, to the home; which is, in fact, Himself, Himself my Head and Lord. For His blessed sake, as my sinless sacrifice of peace, I, believing, am not cast out, having entered in. I am held welcome still; I am "owned a child;" I come not into condemnation; I stand in grace; still and always and continuously for His blessed sake, as Christ for me. Where I fled, there I dwell. And the walls, that shut me in from condemnation as I entered, are as necessary this moment, as they were then, to keep me from condemnation. I cannot dwell in the suburbs, or pitch my tent in all the plain. It is within the sanctuary precinct, and there alone, that I can live, and rest at peace, and work with a quiet mind.

I say this much at once on the force of the words, "Christ my righteousness." From point to point as I proceed, I trust to say more in detail. But in what I have said we touch, I think, the heart of the subject as a subject for

the believer's life and death. Now look a little with me at the passage I read just now, that short, pregnant passage. It stands in one of the inner sanctuaries of the Bible, so to speak. This First Epistle of St. John is very possibly the latest page of Scripture in date. Assuredly in it the Holy Spirit takes the reader into the recesses of spiritual life and experience. He leads him into the most penetrating and searching views of holiness, and obedience, and love. He twice tells him that God is love. He repeatedly speaks of the Christian life, as such, as a life without sinning. A tone and air of serene yet awful sanctity, at once most spiritual and most importunately practical, characterizes the pages. The Christian contemplated in this letter is a man of God indeed. He has fellowship with the Father and the Son. He walks in the light of God. He possesses eternal life possessing God's own Son, who is the Life. He is a child of God now, and when his Lord shall appear he is going to be like Him, most gloriously like Him, seeing Him as He is.

All the more remarkable it is then, all the more significant of deep and pregnant and eternal principle, that in such a passage, and with relation to such a person, comes in the language I have read: "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins." For one thing, we are here warned that the heights and depths of grace leave the liability to actual sinning there still. This blessed believer, this privileged and transfigured man, may very conceivably, and in a very practical sense, sin; so says St. John. The whole weight, indeed, of the precious revelations John is making is to act against his sinning: "These things I write unto you, that ye sin not." But very conceivably the man may sin. And if he does, then, whether the sin look great or little, whether it be visible or not, whether in deed, word, imagination, impulse, tendency, be the sin,—what, when the sin happens, is to be the man's thought? Is he to say, "I am sorry, I regret it, though, after all, it is, from some points of view, a 'fall upward,' a development, a realization, a something not adjusted yet, but to be corrected and harmonized soon"? Is he to say, "My true law is the realization of my deepest individual life, and a certain mysterious knowledge of evil may need to be a factor in the process"? Is he to say, on the other hand, "I am an item in a vast solidarity of regenerate humanity, of spiritualized human life, and all partial evil within this is universal good"? Is he to say, in simpler thought and phrase, "God is a Father: for me the Divine Fatherhood is Alpha and Omega, my Creed, and Articles, and Confession? My spiritual life is just insight into that, and sympathy with that; all other phases of religious thought, if true at all, are but broken lights of that, and the sooner we merge them in that great ray the better? As a man, certainly as a spiritually-developed man, I am akin to God; I am one with God; I am in God; there is nothing in God for me to fear; a deviation from His idea is indeed calamity, disease, imperfection, but the life and love of God suffusing me must heal and restore, and the burthen of the fact is lost in the sea of love"? Are these, or any of them, the ways in which the man is to deal with the event of his having sinned? No, not according to St. John the

Apostle. The truth with which he meets the case is at once sterner and tenderer, harder and firmer. "We have an Advocate with the Father;" who is thus, though a Father, yet a Judge, and a Judge needing urgently a perfectly valid plea on the man's behalf. And our Advocate is "Jesus Christ the righteous;" not now Jesus Christ the meek and lowly, the altogether lovely, with the charm of an eternal love, but Jesus Christ the righteous, the keeper and honourer and glorifier of eternal law; Jesus Christ, at once the Lord and the Bond-servant of everlasting duty; Jesus Christ, in whose eyes that sin, that small sin perhaps, is hateful and abominable beyond imagination; Jesus Christ, whose pleading for us, we may be very sure, will not palliate our sin, nor tone it down, nor talk about falling upward and development.

"And He is the Propitiation for our sins." Here is the basis of the advocacy, the strength of the plea, the "reason why" of the sinning believer's, the deviating, the defective believer's non-condemnation, non-exclusion. "He is the Propitiation for our sins." Mark the words well. First, "the Propitiation"; we know what that is. It has but one meaning, in Greek or English. It means sacrificial pacification of an offended Power. And then, "He is the Propitiation;" observe what that says. It is not "it," but "He;" not merely a thing done, but a Person who has done it; not merely suffering, but Sufferer; not merely obedience, but Obeyer; not merely death, but Lamb of God slain. It is a phrase in which we see merit, profound, mysterious, valid, prevailing; merit such that the sinner before the Father-Judge is an accepted child still, not for his own sake at all, but for this merit's sake; a merit all the while lodged, as all merit must be, in a Person; prevailing not merely because such and such things have been done, but because they have been done, borne, by Him. It is a memorable phrase. It is doubly memorable standing where it does, in this supreme context of life and love. We have got into the inner sanctuary here; we are in this Epistle suffered, indeed, to look into the heart of God, God who is love. Profoundly significant is it, then, that just in that sanctuary, just at that heart, shines the red and awful glory of that word Propitiation, as it shines again below (iv. 10), in that wonderful utterance, "God loved us, and sent His Son to be"—not merely His Revealer, not merely Love Incarnate, but—"the Propitiation for our sins." Never forget that Propitiation is an intensely Johannine word. Theologians have sometimes talked as if it were a "Paulinism," or the like. If it were, I for one believe it would be an infallible oracle none the less. But, as a fact, it is a "Johannism." It shines with its altar fire out of the Johannine teaching of inmost spiritual life.

"He is the Propitiation." The pacification of offended Holiness, the reconciliation of the Father-Judge in His awful consciousness and cognizance of His regenerate child's slightest sin, lies altogether here. Not in effusion of love, but in propitiation. Not in presence of spiritual life, but in propitiation. Not in general considerations about Fatherhood, but in the particular divine fact of an Advocate with the Father, an Advocate who is the Righteous, and who is the Propitiation. So is the sin met, according to St. John. So does the sinner stand in the judgment of that

dread court. So is he "in nowise cast out." So, in respect of not being cast out, is he dealt with as if he had not sinned; as if he were the righteous One himself.

I might say, of course, much more on the details of this mighty, tender, holy passage. I might dwell largely on the word righteous. I might dilate on the sinless obedience through which, and in which, Jesus Christ moved to the cross to be the Propitiation there. I might speak about the mighty positive merit of that obedience, the merit due not precisely to the sacred fact of His having obeyed every iota of His Father's law (for, of course, in the very necessity of His holiness of will, He did so), but to the Divine freewill with which he first accepted the position of Man in which humanly to obey it. And I might point out the deep connexion of all this with the merit of the great crucial act of propitiation proper when, as the Lamb unspotted, as He "who knew no sin," He died (as the Scripture witnesses) "by the determinate counsel of God," and beneath the iniquity of us all, "made a curse for us." But there is no precise necessity that I should go off to these great topics now. I want to leave a few deep impressions large and plain upon our minds; and let this one be our sufficient impress from the deep-cut seal of these verses, the truth that Jesus Christ the Advocate, Jesus Christ the Propitiation, is the infinitely necessary preservative of the regenerate man's acceptance, standing, peace, before the Father, in the event of his ever sinning, be it in violation or in defect.

Let me press it home again and again. "Christ for us" is no mere introduction to a state in which "Christ in us" is to be all in all; "Christ for us," still less, is an "element" of rudimentary and imperfect Christianity, a "childish thing" to be put away as the man grows up into larger, and more genial, and more comprehensive views of religion, and the relations between faith and life. Christ for us, in the region of law, and guilt, and condemnation, and acceptance, and the merit of unique obedience and unique sacrificial suffering, is the preservative all along; all along, so far as the believer for a moment, or for a step, deviates from the most holy law of God.

It is to remind us of this, if I mistake not, that the Apostle adds just here the great words, "and not for us only, but also for the sins of the whole world." Sacred and blessed statement; but why here? Is it not just to remind the awakened and penitent believer, long in Christ, but to-day conscious of wandering from the true close walk with God, that he must stand, for purposes of acceptance, of justification, of peace, precisely on the old humbling ground? Yes, he must just leave Christian experience alone for this purpose, and kneel down at the foot of the Cross, and wrap himself in the Lord's merit, precisely as the last, the newest, the least instructed penitent of "the whole world" has to kneel in the first moment of his first faith. But this is but by the way.

A strong thinker of the past, Isaac Taylor, of Onyx, somewhere says that to the end of time a vicarious atonement (in the old Evangelical sense of those words) will be assailed with objections; and that to the end of time the awakened, the thoroughly awakened, conscience

will gravitate to the vicarious atonement as to its one possible rest. True witness; let me put my seal humbly to it in both its parts.

Another great Christian of a remoter past, Count Finckendorf, has left on record, in the like occasion, a notice of a personal experience of his own which powerfully impressed me when I read it lately in a French memoir of his life. Let me read you the words: "About this time I met with the work of Dippel, in which the doctrine of Imputed Righteousness is attacked. Its system seemed to aim at eliminating from the idea of God the notion of His wrath; and just so far as I sympathized with that view, I liked the system. I was then in the attitude of the natural theologian; and the 'good God' distressed me when His acts seemed to lack a sequence of mathematical precision. I sought to justify Him, at all costs, to men of reason. But when I came to think over my own conversion, I saw that in the death of Jesus and in the word 'Redemption' there lay a profound mystery—a mystery before which Philosophy stops short, but as regards which Revelation is immovably firm. This gave me a new intuition into the doctrine of salvation. I found its blessing and benefit first in the instance of my own heart; then in that of my brethren and fellow-workers (in the Moravian Church). Since the year 1734 the doctrine of the expiatory sacrifice of Jesus has been, and will for ever be, our treasure, our watchword, our all, our panacea against all evil, alike in doctrine and in practice."

True witness, I say again, and again would humbly put my seal to its terms, in regard both of experience and of principle. And the principle of Taylor's dictum and Finckendorf's inner history is just as valid for the progress as for the inception of the believer's life. It is in point, not only in connexion with conversion, but in connexion with the life-long needs of the Christian and his life-long peace and standing with God.

All that I would here add to the witness of these two quotations is a brief word on one great and glorious truth which they do not explicitly mention. I mean the union of Christ and His people, the union of Christ and the believing soul. Deeply convinced am I that in that blessed truth, that truth of which, as you know, the New Testament is really full, there lies not indeed a solution for us here below of all the problems that can be stated about Atonement and Acceptance, but a most precious assistance to the believer's thoughts as he grasps the reality of Atonement and Acceptance, and awaits the light of eternity upon their as yet unsolved mysteries. Union with Christ is the radiating centre, or, if you please, the attracting centre, the uniting centre of the whole range of saving truths. What is the true virtue of faith? Its revealed function of bringing the man into actual vital oneness with our glorious Head. What is the special virtue of that oneness from the point of view of our need as sinners? It is that in the holy solidarity of Head and members the members now receive, not arbitrarily, but as in a profound and real union, the benefit of the merit of the Head on the one hand, and the influx of the life of the Head upon the other. Our Advocate, our Propitiation, is also, in the regenerate order of things, our Elder Brother, our celestial Bride-

groom, our vital root, our living and life-giving Head. In Him we possess His possessions, won for us. Amongst them we possess His dear-bought merit, good for us from first to last of our need. That merit is lodged far overmore in Him, and we are one with Him. But this I but refer to in passing, with deep reverence before its radiant mystery, and I now make haste to a closer. How shall I best do this, so as to leave on our hearts and minds the impression which I long to leave—an impression at once deep and tender as before God; an impression of awe in presence of His holiness, and peace in view of His acceptance? My friends in Jesus Christ, I will seek to bear a brief, earnest witness, in closing, to one profound need of our time. It is a far-spread need in all sections of the Christian Church; a need which prompts me to anything in the world but controversial acrimony; a need which is rather fitted to humble and hide the face as one essays to speak of it; a need which is traceable not ultimately to any special doctrinal aberrations, but to the fallen heart of man: I mean the deep, the solemn need of a keener, tenderer, profounder sense of sin. It is a trite, prosaic thing to say, taken upon the surface; but it is a thing of literally vital importance to the Church and to the soul. Rejoicing as I do in the manifold proofs of Christian life at this time, I must yet utter my deep conviction that we are not growing, on the whole, in the sense of the sinfulness of sin. And, while I think this, I remember with sad distinctness that most true saying, that there has never been a great error, a great deviation from Scripture, in Church history, but an inadequate sense of the sinfulness of sin has had to do with it. Oh, my friends, let us pray for an intuition, so far as we can bear it (we cannot bear very much of it), into the sinfulness of sin, into the awful wrongness and rebellion of sin, into the condemnableness of sin, into sin as "by the commandment" (note those words) "becoming exceeding sinful." Let us pray that, while we mourn it as a calamity and as disease, and loathe it as pollution, we may have some deep, some awful sense of it as guilt, as the thing which the holy law of God, the holy preceptive and prohibitive law of God, must to all eternity abhor, and denounce, and doom. Let us pray, pray really, that such a view may be to each of us most individual and personal, not a point for disputation with our neighbour a thousandth part so much as for self-abasement and hiding in Christ Jesus for our own souls. Let us ask the Lord the Spirit to show us our little sins, "our secret sins, in the light of His countenance," to let in a ray of His fiery Law upon our vanity, our pride, our temper, our unfairness, our sloth, our selfishness, our worldliness.

Let us ask Him to show us what His Law says to our lack of love, our defect of love, to our neighbour, to our brother, to our "King that hath saved us." Let us ask Him, in the severity of His mercy, to take us to pieces, and show us the interior of life a little as He has seen it. Let us ask Him to expound to us, for our own soul's knowledge, that word of His Book, "Whosoever things the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world become guilty before God." We need it, our modern Christendom needs it, with exceeding need.

And that the prayer may be the sooner granted, what shall we do meanwhile? We will gaze in the glass of the Word, and ask for the Spirit's light upon the revelation of the holiness of God. Here, too, our need is extreme. The all-sacred words of love, and mercy, and Fatherhood, too often we so read them from their divine contents as to forget that thing without which, be sure of it, none of them would retain one gleam of glory, "the glorious and fearful Name," the "Holy, Holy, Holy," that aspect and attribute which possesses the watchers nearest the eternal throne with an absorbing and awful adoration. Oh, let us learn the often-forgotten use and habit of adoration, of holy fear, of the sight of God, which makes the soul unveil its face with its very wings, while yet it sings the solemn praises of the infinitely Holy. To see Him so is both to die and to live; to die to the last dream of claim or refuge, save beneath the cross; to live to and in peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, the discovery of the love of God which is in Jesus Christ our Lord. "Mine eyes saw Thee, therefore I abhor myself." "Woe is me, for I am a man unclean; for mine eyes have seen the King." "When I saw Him I fell at His feet as dead. He laid His right hand on me, saying, Fear not; I am He that liveth, and I became dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore."

My treatment of this great theme ends here. God knows with what a sense of incompleteness and inadequacy I close it. But, at least, it has been to me a sacred privilege to be allowed to bear my humble personal testimony to the "reason of the hope" of the awakened sinner—may I say, of the awakened believer?—as he finds himself face to face with the claim, with the law, with the holiness of God. It is long years now since—in the morning of manhood, after many a mental wandering—the question was driven home upon my own inmost being by a power which indeed was not myself: "What must thou do to be saved?" But that question came home in a way over which lapse of time has no power. The soul got intuitions then which it can never lose, into self, into sin, into holiness, and—blessed be God—into the need, the reality, the eternal rightness of the blood of the Lamb, of the righteousness of the Mediator. Yes, long

years have rolled, but these things are above time. And meanwhile, in the experiences of time, I have seen abundantly enough in observation of a richly varied world of acquaintance and communion to assure me, amidst a universe of mysteries, that in the living grasp of these mighty truths, in the application of them and assimilation of them into man's life, there is "a power of God unto salvation," in a sense most profound, which there is in nothing else. Christ crucified—Christ crucified—He is still a stumbling-block. He is still folly. He is still and for ever the power of God, and the wisdom of God too.

My friends, I come back, after all, as my last word, to this—let us not rest without some deep sight of the Holy One all in His holiness. It will show us self, it will show us sin; but also, blessed be God, it will show us the glory and wonder of the Cross, the glory of the Lamb, the peace of pardon, the bliss of acceptance, the moral strength of the joy of the Lord, the joy of ceasing from our own works, to behold the fair beauty of JEHOVAN-TSIDKENU, the Lord our Righteousness.

Let me quote the words of blessed Robert M'Cheyne, of Dundee:—

"I once was a stranger to grace and to God,
I knew not my danger and felt not my load;
Though friends spoke with rapture of Christ
on the tree,
JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU was nothing to me.

"When free grace awoke me with light from on high,
Then legal fears shook me, I trembled to die;
No refuge, no safety, in self could I see,
JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU my Saviour must be.

"My terrors all vanished before the sweet Name;
My guilty fears banished, with boldness I came
To drink at the fountain, life-giving and free—
JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU is all things to me.

"E'en treading the valley, the shadow of death,
This watchword shall rally my faltering breath;
For while from life's fever my God sets me free,
JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU my death-song shall be."

THE HOLY GHOST, THE AUTHOR AND SUSTAINER OF SPIRITUAL LIFE.

By the Rev. D. MACEWAN, D.D., Presbyterian Church, Clapham.

(Address delivered at Exeter Hall on March 16.)

All the truths of the Gospel that deserve to be called "fundamental" are alike important. In relation, at least, to Christianity as a system, no one can be said to be more important than another. It is impossible to say which stone in a foundation gives most stability to a building, or which of the primary colours gives most beauty to the rainbow. But were I to speak of Christianity not as a system of truth, but as a *living force*; not in the relation of one doctrine to another, but in the bearing of the whole on the practical life of man and the conversion of the world to God; I think there is undoubtedly one truth, one article of belief, that must be allowed to have the pre-eminence. Looking at the general structure of a tree, it may be hard to tell whether the root, the trunk, or the branches be the most important; but, looking to its power

of growth and expansion, and its capacity to break forth on every side into blossoms and fruit, there can be no doubt that the chief thing is the vitalising sap within, permeating every part, and without which, root, trunk, and branches, however beautiful in structure and perfect in their relation to each other, would be practically dead.

It is, then, with some sense of responsibility and of dependence, I trust, on Him, whose divine work and paramount claims I wish to set forth, that I ask attention to the grand fundamental article of Christian faith expressed in the words, "I believe in the Holy Ghost." And, in approaching such a theme, Milton's prayer to the Spirit may well be ours:

"What in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support."

I am afraid that very vague ideas prevail, and have long prevailed, among Christians concerning the work of the Holy Spirit. Controversy, in its old sense here, may have ceased. The views of such men as Arius, Sabellius, and Socinus are now discussed only in theological treatises, or from the chairs of theological professors. But on this, as on other subjects, there may be worse things than controversy. To ignore, or lose sight of, an important Bible truth is quite as great an evil as to fight over it. Error is all the more dangerous when it is unchallenged, and its deadening effect all the more insidious when it is latent. Without controverting the truth concerning the Spirit and His work, there has been failure, I fear, in acknowledging and honouring Him as that Divine Agent without whom the Gospel itself is powerless to save. Neither in the preaching of our pulpits, nor in the prayers of our people, nor in the great missionary and benevolent enterprises of the Christian Church at the present day, have the presence and power of God's Spirit received the lofty recognition to which His prominence in the teaching of Scripture entitles Him. And if the whole of Christendom were only to rise, as often as she utters them, to a full practical conception of what is involved in the words, "I believe in the Holy Ghost," nothing, I am sure, would be so likely to lift her up to a higher plane of life and action, to bring down upon her a Pentecostal baptism of revived spiritual energy, and to open up before her a new era of holy progress and unprecedented triumph.

What does believing in the Holy Spirit include, and what are the great practical lessons which this fundamental truth of the Gospel necessarily carries with it?

Believing in the Holy Ghost, if it be true and scriptural, includes, undoubtedly, faith in His own divinity and personality. We can have no right conception of the Spirit's work unless, to begin with, we have right conceptions of Himself. That He is divine all must admit, and do admit, who accept the Bible as the Word of God, and believe in the Trinity of the eternal Godhead. Every one knows that the expressions "God" and "the Spirit of God" are used interchangeably in Scripture; that words recorded in the Old Testament as spoken by God are frequently quoted in the New Testament as spoken by the Holy Ghost; and that attributes which God alone can possess, acts which God alone can perform, and honours and worship which God alone can claim or receive, are all freely accorded in Scripture to the Divine Spirit. That He is a Person is a doctrine no less scriptural and important than that He is Divine. To say that the Spirit of God is only the divine power or energy in active operation, to speak of Him as an influence and nothing more, or as a mere personification of the divine attributes, is to lower the whole tone and practical value of Bible teaching concerning the Spirit's work. To be brought into contact with a mere power or influence in the matter of our personal salvation, a power to be yielded to or resisted, is surely a very different thing, in a moral point of view, from knowing that we are dealing with a Divine Person, and that He is dealing with us. What could our Lord mean when He commissioned His apostles to "baptize in the name of the Father,

and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," if not that the Holy Ghost was a Person equally with the Father and the Son? What could He mean by "blasphemy against the Holy Ghost" as a sin not to be forgiven, if He intended simply blasphemy against a power or influence? And when you find in Scripture all the acts and elements of personality, the exercise of individual intelligence, and an independent will, predicated of the Spirit—such as commanding, counselling, comforting, witnessing, quickening, striving, being tempted, being grieved, helping man's infirmities, and making intercession for them, seeking, searching, taking of the things of Christ and showing them unto us, and distributing to every one "severally as He willeth,"—what can be the force or use of language if all this is not intended to represent a Person? The divinity and personality of the Holy Spirit throw around His entire work an ineffable majesty and tenderness, and give immeasurable weight and urgency both to the claims which He has upon us, and to the reverence and confidence which we owe to Him.

But believing in the Holy Ghost includes more than this. It includes faith in Him as the Author, Sustainer, and Perfecter of the divine life in the human soul. There is no doubt a sense in which He is the source of all life. His divine operation is to be adoringly recognized both in creation and providence. He is the great Artist who has garnished the heavens and beautified the earth, the Almighty Architect who has built up the universe, and in no pantheistic sense the all-pervading Presence that operates effectively in maintaining and controlling all the laws and elements of nature. I do not detract from the special work of God's Spirit in the hearts of His people, but rather enhance and magnify it by acknowledging that all that is noblest in human intellect, all that is best and purest in human genius, and all that in every age and every land has contributed to human progress and well-being, are due to Him. But it is of something infinitely higher than these common operations of the Divine Spirit that I now speak. It is of the life of God in the human soul, the life which we lost in Adam and regained in Christ, the life which the Son of God came down from heaven and died on the cross to restore, the life which alone has bound up with it the pardon of sin, adoption into God's family, growth in the Divine likeness, and all the blessings and privileges expressed in that one comprehensive Bible word—salvation. It is spiritual life, one as distinct from the moral as the moral is distinct from the intellectual, or the intellectual from the animal—a life whose normal type is Jesus Christ himself, and whose native sphere and home is amid the fellowship and bliss of heaven. Through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, it belongs, I say, to the Holy Ghost as His special office and work both to impart this life, to sustain and promote it, and finally to perfect it in the souls of God's redeemed people. And, though Gospel preaching and Church ordinances and all the other means of grace, as well as the minds and hearts of men themselves, have an important and responsible part to do in connexion with it, the work itself, from the first beginning of spiritual life in the new birth to the last consummation of it in glory, must be traced to no inferior instrumentality,

but to the supreme agency and effectual operation of the Divine Spirit.

I grant that there is a side of mystery to this truth. What truth has not its side of mystery? This most sacred of doctrines, this holy of holies in the temple of truth in which the soul of man comes into direct contact with the living God, has its hidden secrets, which it would be presumption to attempt to explore. I cannot define the mode in which the Spirit operates, or adjust the relation in which His working stands to human responsibility or the freedom of the will. Our Lord himself does not attempt this, but says: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, yet canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

I admit, too, that the truth may seem utterly incomprehensible to the world. But that should not surprise us. In promising the Holy Spirit to His people, Christ expected as much, for He said: "Whom the world cannot receive, for it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him, for He shall be with you, and shall be in you." Even the celebrated Lord Chatham, after hearing a sermon on the Spirit by the devout Cecil, confessed to his friend that he could not understand it; but on asking that friend if he supposed any one in the audience did, he was told that many poor, plain, unlettered people there understood it perfectly and received it with joy. "The natural man receiveth not the things of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

One has to admit, too, with regret that it is a truth which has not been without its liability to abuse, and that in the course of centuries it has occasionally suffered and been brought into contempt through the ignorant zeal and misguided enthusiasm of weak and ill-formed minds.

But none of these affect the truth itself. There it stands as a truth "most surely to be believed among us," established and attested by the Word of God in passages so numerous that, to afford even a glimpse of them, one would have to do with them as astronomers with the stars when they arrange them into separate groups or constellations. Some are in the form of prayers, as when the Psalmist prays, "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me;" or the Apostle, that we be "strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man." Some are in the form of promises, as when God promises to put His Spirit "within us," or the Saviour, that He would "send the Comforter, which is the Spirit of Truth." Some are in the form of predictions, as when the prophet declares that the Spirit shall be "poured out in the latter day upon all flesh," "poured out as water on him that is thirsty, and as floods on the dry ground." Some are in the form of warnings, as when we are told not to grieve, not to resist, not to quench the Holy Spirit, or when God threatens that His Spirit "will not always strive with men." Some are in the form of doctrinal statements, as when the Saviour says, "Except a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot see the Kingdom of God," or when the Apostle affirms that we are saved, "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by the renewing of the Holy Ghost." Some are in the form of passing allusions, as

when the Apostle speaks of "the love of God being shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us," or of Christians "beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and being changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." And some are in the form of practical exhortations, as in the words, "Be ye filled with the Spirit," and "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God?" It is therefore the Spirit that quickens, it is the Spirit that enlightens, it is the Spirit that strengthens, it is the Spirit that sanctifies, it is the Spirit that bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, it is the Spirit that seals us unto the day of redemption, it is the Spirit that makes us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, and it is the Spirit that is the earnest of that inheritance. And thus the testimony to this great truth concerning the Spirit's work is interwoven with the whole texture of Scripture—not a solitary golden thread, but multitudes of such threads running in all directions through the entire web, all combining to proclaim Him the supreme Author, Promoter, Sustainer, and Perfecter of the divine life in the human soul, the highest gift of our ascended Lord to His Church, without which all earthly ministries, and sacerdotal services, and human instrumentalities are vain—a gift shed forth abundantly, with the exalted aim of making us living members of a living Christ, or, as Isaac Barrow so eloquently expresses it, that we might be made "temples of His divinity, thrones of His majesty, orbs of His celestial light, paradises of His blissful presence."

Believing in the Holy Ghost, therefore, includes faith also in His abiding presence with the Church, and His indwelling in the hearts of all true believers. But I do not dwell on this. I wish rather to call attention to the fact that there are important practical lessons which a true and scriptural faith in the Spirit necessarily carries with it.

There is one thing, indeed, which it does not teach. It does not teach us to be less diligent or earnest in the use of means. The circulation of the Word, the preaching of the Gospel, the observance of religious ordinances, and the putting forth of human efforts to bring men to Christ are not in any way diminished in importance or urgency by this doctrine. God's Spirit, we must remember, works by means, not by miracles. And so far from slackening our diligence, or damping our zeal, or cramping our energies in seeking by all instrumentalities in our power the salvation of men, a true and enlightened faith in the Divine Spirit should just have the opposite effect. We should be inspired with all the greater courage, and inflamed with all the more glowing zeal to use the means by the very knowledge that we depend on the Spirit of the living God to give them effect. Looking to the magnitude of the evils we have to combat, we might well despair of ourselves and of the weapons we wield, but for the assurance that behind and beyond us and all our feeble instrumentalities there is the power of Him in whose hand even "the worm Jacob" becomes as "a sharp threshing instrument, having teeth to thresh the mountains and beat them small, and make the hills as chaff," and that, relying on His

Divine Agency, we can therefore say to the most gigantic of obstacles to the progress and triumph of the truth, either in the heart or in the world, "Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Jehovah thou shalt become a plain." For "it is not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."

Does it not teach us, however, the terrible depth of the sinner's need? Does it not proclaim his spiritual condition to be one that demands something higher than mere human remedies? Earthly physicians may do much to mitigate pain, relieve sickness, and restore the enfeebled and emaciated human frame to health, but one thing they cannot do—they cannot bring back life when it is gone. Let the vital spark be once extinguished in a human breast, they have no more power to rekindle it there than to create a world. And the doctrine of the Spirit assuredly teaches a similar truth concerning all who are "dead in trespasses and sins." Does it not teach us also the true source of the Church's power; that it is not in her wealth, nor her numbers, nor her powerful organisations and eloquent ministries—important as these may be in their own sphere—but in the degree in which she is filled by the Spirit of God, and accompanied in all her efforts and service with His divine presence and power?

It is through want of this at the present day that in so many cases it is not the Church that is converting the world, but the world that is converting the Church. What can she be but feeble in her efforts and crippled in her resources and limited in her progress and triumphs so long as there is so much in her divisions and jealousies, her dependence on outward forms and ceremonies, and her conformity to the world, to hinder the manifestations of the Spirit's presence in the midst of her, and the glorious

forth-puttings of His almighty power? Think of Pentecost and of the thousands converted in one day. Think of the blessed times of revival which the Church of God has witnessed when, under the baptism of the Holy Ghost, whole communities have been aroused to a sense of their sin and their need of a Saviour. And were only a day to come that throughout her whole extent and through all her varied denominations the Holy Spirit made her indeed His habitation, and her heart the throne of His power, so that all her movements became but the breathings of His divine life within her, and all her enterprises and energies but the weapons in His mighty hand, who might not hope soon to see her mission accomplished, and the whole world through her instrumentality converted to God? Then should "the mountain of the Lord's house be speedily established in the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills, and all nations flow into it," and soon should "the knowledge of the Lord fill the earth as the waters cover the sea."

But does it not teach us above everything the necessity for fervent and believing prayer? Is it not to this that God referred when He said, "Prove me now herewith if I will not open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing till there be not room enough to receive it"? An expressing, therefore, the best and richest of blessings, the blessing that brings all other blessings in its train—life, peace, hope, holiness, qualification for every service, courage for every enterprise, grace for every trial, victory over death, and meekness for heaven; and as involving prayer's strongest argument, its mightiest plea, its purest motive, and its highest aim,—oh! let the words be engraven on every heart, deeply, savingly, lastingly—"I believe in the Holy Ghost."

THE INSPIRATION, AUTHORITY, AND SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE.

By the Rev. JOSEPH ANSON, D.D., Regent's Park College.

(Address delivered at Kensington Town Hall on March 16.)

The subject I have undertaken to introduce—the Authority, the Sufficiency, the Inspiration of Scripture, as our Rule of Faith and Practice—is of great moment. It is indeed vital. Deny it, and whence can we get our knowledge of God, of salvation, of Christian duty, of eternal life? The alternative is Popery or Rationalism, each man his own teacher and law, or the darkness of heathendom. Deny it, and everything is denied—God's method of forgiveness, of renewal, of holiness. In a sense, the subject includes all that is noblest and most blessed in the Gospel itself. If this foundation be destroyed, the whole Christian fabric will totter and fall.

And yet we are charged with the worship of a Book. Bibliolatry, it is said, is the weakness of Protestantism, though I believe it is our strength. The Book we believe to be the Book of God, the "God of Books," as one calls it. God having spoken of old time unto the fathers in the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us in His Son. And each is in a sense the Divine Word: Scripture as the Word being the utterance of the divine love and righteousness; the Son the Divine Word in visible living form with unspeakably greater tenderness and power.

But the meaning of these statements needs to

be made clear by explanation and examples. The New Testament is made up almost entirely of the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ, of five of His apostles whom He commissioned to give His Gospel to the world, and of the Epistles of Paul. The Old Testament consists chiefly of the revelation given through Moses, the holy writings, including the Psalms and other books, and the prophets. This double collection of three sets of books each, make up nearly the whole volume.

Let us begin with the New Testament. My statement is that in all the three parts we have the strongest assertion of the divine authority of each. Take two Gospels as representing the Gospels, Matthew and John. They contain together forty-nine chapters and one thousand nine hundred and forty verses, and, of these one thousand nine hundred and forty verses, eleven hundred and forty verses were spoken by our Lord. They describe the purpose of His coming and the nature of His kingdom. They tell of the glory He had with God before the world was, and how men are to honour the Son even as they honour the Father. In His earliest recorded discourse He describes the nature and the necessity of the new birth, speaks of the

"exaltation," the lifting up that awaits Him. By-and-by He speaks more plainly, and shows how He must suffer and give His life a substitutionary ransom for many, His blood being shed for the remission of sins. God's love and righteousness are again and again revealed, and again and again men are warned to flee from the wrath to come. He that believeth is saved. He that won't believe, the wrath of God abideth on him. All this, the very essence of the Gospel, is taught by our Lord again and again, while He asserts in various forms the divinity of His mission and His authority in the world and in the Church.

Mark how our Lord describes His teaching: "If God were your Father," said He to the Jews, "ye would love me; for I came forth and am come from God; for neither have I come of myself, but He sent me" (John viii. 42). "My teaching is not mine, but His that sent me" (John vii. 16). "The words I speak unto you I speak not from myself; believe me that I am in my Father, and the Father in me" (John xiv. 10, 11). And again, addressing the Father, He says, "The words which Thou gavest me, I have given them, and they have known of a truth that I came forth from Thee" (John xvii. 8). His words abiding in us are life and holiness. We give, therefore, to the words Christ spoke the authority Christ claimed for them. And though we do not speak of them as inspired, any more than we speak of the Decalogue as inspired, each coming direct from God himself, we regard them all as divine. "Lord Jesus, to whom can we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

Nor less emphatic is the claim put forth by Paul. As the Apostle of the Gentiles, his authority was questioned, and, therefore, he vindicated it in the strongest terms. One advantage of the opposition he encountered is that we have learnt from his case what inspired authority meant, and how all the apostles claimed it. "Paul an apostle, not from man, nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father." Such is his title (Gal. i. 1). "For," adds he, "I received (the Gospel) not from man, nor was it taught me, but it came to me through the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. i. 12). "We speak God's wisdom . . . revealed to us through the Spirit; not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth" (1 Cor. ii. 6, 10, 13). The Gospel, therefore, he preached was to be received not as the word of man, but (as it is in truth) as the Word of God, which also worketh effectually in all that believe (1 Thess. ii. 13). This claim he makes for himself, only that he may be not a whit behind other apostles, and so makes it also for them. He makes it, moreover, for what he writes as well as for what he speaks, and he repeats his claim in nine, at least, of his Epistles, and in some of them (notably in 1 and 2 Corinthians and in Galatians) he repeats it again and again.

To five of the apostles who have written books in the New Testament Christ gave commission to publish His Gospel to the world; and promised them on four different occasions the presence of the Holy Spirit, who was to recall to their remembrance what He himself had taught, and to guide men into all the truth. After His resurrection He renewed and extended the promise (Matt.

xviii. 18-20). To the five this promise was fulfilled (Acts i. 4); the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs which followed (Mark xvi. 20), and the good news, the Gospel which they proclaimed, was proclaimed in and by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. So Peter defines and affirms the facts (1 Pet. i. 21).

I am not now dealing with the evidences of these claims. I am dealing only with the fact that all the teachers of the New Testament make them. But I may add that the claims are vindicated by all the evidences which support the truth of the Gospel itself. Christ's mighty works, the signs of apostles, were seen wherever they went. The Master and the disciples alike gave themselves to the cultivation and practice of holiness. Their lives they laid down in attestation of their sincerity and truthfulness; and multitudes, through the Spirit, became obedient to the faith. Whatever evidence there is, in short, of the truth of the Gospel is evidence of the divine authority of these first teachers. They claimed it, and there is no middle place between the recognition of this claim and the alternative that they were deceivers and not true.

The divine authority of the Old Testament is best proved in our times from the teaching of our Lord and His apostles. They accept as authoritative the books whose authority the Jews had accepted, and they ascribe them in various ways and in many passages to the Holy Ghost or to God. They speak of the rites and symbols of Judaism as intended by the Holy Ghost to set forth evangelical facts and truths; as they speak of the facts of Jewish history, and of the lives of good and bad men, as rich in moral and spiritual lessons. They reason again and again from single words and expressions, and quote all as intended by the Spirit to have such meanings and uses. All Scripture being inspired of God, is also profitable for instruction in righteousness. No prophecy ever came by the will of man, but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Pet. i. 21).

Such are emphatically the claims of the Old Testament as described by our Lord, by Peter and Paul. Like claims are put forth and vindicated by the Old Testament writers themselves. But the short and easy proof of their claims is the authority and example of our Lord and His apostles. The Gospel is the completion of the Law, and both are from God.

My theme includes another point—the sufficiency of Holy Scripture. It is not only a rule of faith and practice, it is the rule. It contains all that is necessary to our salvation and holiness. What cannot be proved from it is no matter of faith, but, at most, of opinion. Nor can we accept any new revelation as from God unless it come supported by the same miraculous evidence which proved and vindicated the old.

We need and use our reason to investigate its evidences and to ascertain its meaning. We use the teaching of learned and spiritual men whom God has taught. Above all, we seek the guidance and teaching of the Holy Ghost, the lessons of a loving and devout heart. But each of these helps we use with caution. Reason may become Rationalism, which interprets truth only to deny it. The teaching of good men may

become more human institutions, and even the experience of a devoted heart may lead to mysticism, or prove a defective spirit. No one of these helps, nor all combined, can be regarded as of co-equal authority. They are not parts of the inspired law, they only help to expound it. To follow them when they contradict the Bible is to deny it. To follow them when they add to it is to admit another revelation, and so to add to God's work. And to make them our guide when they agree with it is to rest our confidence on the wisdom of men rather than on the truth of God. Use them all, especially the loving and devoted heart, only remember that it is to the law and to the testimony we are to make our final appeal. Studied with holy simplicity and humble teachableness, the Bible is the divine means whereby men are led by the Spirit into all the truth.

The sufficiency of Scripture! What is the Old Testament? The revelation of God to Abraham, to Moses, to patriarchs and prophets—a continued revelation, extending over 2,000 years. Every part of it was a light shining in a dark place. By it, as we know, thousands believed, and were saved; and such characters were formed as the clew of the Hebrews describes. The earlier portions of it enlightened the eyes, converted the souls, and rejoiced the hearts of multitudes; and the later portions give lessons on God's character and government, and even on the work of our Lord, hardly inferior to the fuller disclosures of the New Testament. The Bereans examined it, and therefore they believed. From a child Timothy had been taught it, and he became wise unto salvation, and his gentling appeared unto all. How often have we wished to spend a day with Christ, to hear the gracious words that proceeded from His lips! How often have we wished that we could have been present when for the first time one of Paul's letters was read to the churches he addressed! Now, through the New Testament, we know more of the teaching and spirit of our Master than any one disciple knew; and we read not one of Paul's Epistles, but at least thirteen of them—the entire library which was provided for a dozen churches. The whole circle of truth and duty, as revealed and applied, is ours. We know all that was known by the churches of Asia, and Italy, and Greece. And if Old Testament believers had reason to chant the 104th Psalm and the 119th in praise of only a portion of the sacred books, what shall our song be, to whom all these revelations have come, with the added teaching of the ever-living Christ, and the added influences of Pentecost, and of the dispensation of the Holy Ghost?

The inspiration of Scripture is another mode of describing the theme I have been discussing. It adds to the authority and sufficiency of Scripture a statement of the way in which authority and sufficiency were given to it. "Men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." All Scripture is "God-inspired." Externally, through study of facts and records under divine guidance, by visions and direct utterances, the full meaning of which the prophets themselves did not always understand, God revealed His will. Internally, the Spirit trained and instructed them, and they sought to know what the Spirit that was in them did signify.

Large portions of the Psalms and of the Epistles are traceable to this gracious work of the Spirit in the hearts of those who believed. The Psalms often record the personal experience of the writers. Paul, the writer of the Romans, passed through a spiritual training that made the teaching of that Epistle in the highest degree clear and precious to him. This gracious preparation of men's hearts to write experimentally of what they were instructed to teach does not lessen the work of the Spirit in them. It confirms and sanctifies it. The fact that they knew what they believed, and really felt the truths they taught, adds to the naturalness and, in a sense, even to the authority of their teaching. They testify what they know, as the Evangelists testify what they had seen.

The Authority, the Sufficiency, the Inspiration of Scripture, the Rule of our Practice and Faith. Let me mark, in closing, two or three lessons suggested by this theme.

1. Let me repeat with renewed emphasis the warning with which I began: the question of the divine authority of the teaching of our Lord, of Paul, and of the other apostles, is vital. If they have not spoken with divine authority, there is for us no divine revelation on earth. The very revelation they profess to give, noble as it seems, is rendered untrustworthy by the claims they make. None have come to tell us of heavenly things. No provision has been made for forgiveness. The great and precious promises of the Gospel are of human origin only, and cannot sustain or sanctify us. Every religious feeling, every virtue, all practical benevolence, the hope that strengthens us in struggling against sin and gives us peace in dying—all of which are maintained, as Christians know, by these views of God and Christ which His Word gives—all must cease. The very light in us is darkness: how great, then, must the darkness be!

2. All the weapons of the Gospel are defensive except one: the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the breast-plate of righteousness—all are defensive. The one aggressive weapon is the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God! Master it, use it in your individual life and in your church work. Use it, and you will conquer. Be mighty in the Scriptures, and full of the Holy Ghost, and the tempter will flee from you; nor shall any be able to withstand your reasonings and appeals.

3. Free yourselves from the snare of our modern unbelief, that the work of the Bible is over, that the Book itself is effete, and that it fails to meet the difficulties or even to define the duties of our modern civilization. All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man, modern culture included, as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, the flower falleth away, but the Word of the Lord endureth for ever, which Word is by the Gospel preached unto you. Let men catch its spirit, and apply its principles, and there are no modern social difficulties it cannot solve, no new duties it cannot explain and enforce.

4. The want of our times, in the higher department of theology, is the profounder and the simpler study of our Bibles. We often go beyond Scripture in our explanations. We still oftener fall short of it in our beliefs. Let us say all it says, and no more, and let us believe all we say. The result will be clearer light, more revealed

knowledge, larger numbers, and more complete evangelical fellowship. I cannot expand these thoughts; I can only suggest them as apper-

tains to my theme, to this gathering of the Evangelical Alliance, and to the needs of our age.

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE PROPITIATION FOR SIN.

By the Rev. E. A. STUART, M.A., Vicar of St. James', Holloway.

(Address delivered at Kensington Town Hall on March 16.)

The subject entrusted to me in this series of most important meetings for testimony is the "Propitiation for Sin of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Now the first thing that strikes one in studying this subject is that the word *ἀποκατάστασις* "Propitiation," is found only in two passages: 1 John ii. 2, "He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world;" and 1 John iv. 10, "He who is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the Propitiation for our sins." It is quite true we have a cognate word (*ἀσθενεια*) in Luke xviii. 12, where the publican prays God to be propitiated to him. And in Heb. ii. 17 we are told that our Lord was made like unto His brethren, that "He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation (propitiation) for the sins of the people." This idea runs all through the Bible. For example, in Heb. viii. 12, "I will be merciful" (or propitious, *ἀσθενεις*). A cognate form of the same word (*ἀσθενεια*) is used for the propitiatory or mercy-seat, in Heb. ix. 5, and applied to the Lord Jesus Christ in Rom. iii. 25.

But the two most important and the clearest passages are those two from the First Epistle of St. John. For this I am thankful, because one of the great phrases of the day is that "the Pauline age is passing away, and the Johannine age is dawning." If that means that the time is coming when men cannot endure sound doctrine, but when a universal charity, falsely so called, is in vogue which "will set the throne of the universe upon rocks and sing a lullaby" to all creeds or no creeds, I grant that it has come already; but I deny that any such idea has the faintest countenance from the apostle of love. St. John was as clear and dogmatic in his own way as St. Paul. He who brings before us the sweet fruits of the Spirit, "love, joy, and peace," and gave us that memorable picture of spiritual love—the best of all the gifts—in 1 Cor. xiii., was no more dogmatic. And, on the other hand, I do not allow that the apostle of love is open to the charge of ignoring sound doctrine. The fact is, these things are closely allied. Love is the flower, but faith is the root. I am not surprised the world should be so enamoured of the flower that they should want to pluck the blossom; but they would cover it from the root whence it derives sap and vitality, and so it must speedily wither and die. Let us, therefore, rejoice in the grand assurance that God is love, but remember that love is manifested to us in the propitiation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. There is no antagonism, nor can there be, between the love and justice of God. Holiness is as enduring as grace; ours is not a vengeful God, but a just God; "mercy and truth are met together."

Now I desire in the few remarks I shall make to bring before you first the need for propitiation; second, the method of propitiation; and third, the results of propitiation.

1. The need for propitiation arises from the fact that separation exists between God and man by reason of sin; and this separation concerns not only man, but God. Therefore there is a divine as well as a human necessity for propitiation. Here it is we join issue with those who teach another doctrine. We believe not only in a subjective statement, but in an objective statement also. Some tell us it was necessary to remove fear from man, but not wrath from God. Some tell us man could not believe the love of God, and therefore the death of Christ was necessary to reconcile man back to God; but it is, they say, an unworthy thought to suppose that God needed to be reconciled to man, to suppose that a Being whose essence is pure unchangeable love, and who Himself is without variableness or shadow of turning, needed to be reconciled by sacrifice. Now, we believe that no sacrifice was necessary to induce Him to do that which before He was unwilling to do. At the same time, we believe it to be a more travesty of sound doctrine to represent that we teach that the Father was about to strike sinful man when Jesus came in between and intercepted the blow by receiving in His own body the stroke. That, we say, is more travesty of what we teach. We believe that God the Father is as much love as the Son, and that God the Son is as just and holy as God the Father.

Further, we believe that the love of God is the antecedent cause of the sacrifice of the Son. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." Not that God loves the world because Christ has died for it, but rather that Christ died for it because God loved it. Thus, because of this unchangeable love, there is a necessity for propitiation. For what is your idea of divine love? A love devoid of justice, developing itself in the selfish fondness of a partial parent who overlooks faults in his favourite child? That may be love without justice and holiness. But it is no true idea of love. I thank God our English word for love retains its sanctity, and has not degenerated into the idea expressed by the French *amour*. Our thought of love is not a love devoid of justice and holiness, and because this love is holy and pure and just, as well as unchangeable, there is a necessity for propitiation. We believe God loved the world even while in sin; but that love could not be active—it was hindered in its outflow by sin. The world was out of harmony by reason of sin. Things must be restored to a normal condition if the purity of holiness can bless mankind. Where there is sin, love cannot act until justice be satisfied and holiness vindicated. Therefore propitiation is necessary for the reconciliation of mercy and truth, righteousness and peace. Only at the Cross of Christ can these meet together. If you think of it, righteous anger implies love. You are angry because your self-love is wounded, because your love for others is wounded, or because you love the one who has offended. If you cared nothing for the offender, or for those injured, you would not trouble to be

angry; what had been done mattered nothing to you, and you would pass by the action without notice on your part. Hence God's wrath is owing to God's love. Because He loves the sinner, He is angry with the sin. The heathen have no idea of the wrath of God; that idea is associated with love. If the love of God be true love, justice must be satisfied and holiness vindicated and inculcated. Love would save men in the best way possible. But there are three problems to be solved (I speak with all reverence): justice must be satisfied, holiness must be inculcated, and love to God must be drawn forth on the part of the sinner. The Cross of Christ has solved these problems. The sinner needs a propitiation. God's love and justice require a propitiation; and in the laying down by the Lord Jesus of His life, that need for propitiation was met in full, not only by removing the wrath of God, but also by reconciling the sinner to God.

II. So much for the need; now as to the means whereby propitiation was effected. Man could not effect it by a propitiation offered on his part. Reconciliation can only be accomplished by condemning and pulling away the interrupting principle itself. Now our Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself to be the propitiation for our sins. "Who Himself bare our sins in His own body on the tree." "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." Many different explanations are given of that word, and difficulties have arisen from not looking at the actual phraseology. He "condemned sin in the flesh." These three things are necessary in order to condemn sin in the flesh: first, it must be shown to be something done obnoxious to law; second, it must be shown to be preventable; and third, it must be shown to be injurious, as well as obnoxious to a just law. So, when a criminal is before a judge, he condemns him if the law be against him. If the law be a just law, the condemnation is just. But men have been condemned by the law, and glorified as martyrs by history. In such cases the law was not just. In order that sin should be condemned in the flesh, these three things must come together.

Now, Jesus Christ condemned sin in the flesh in these three particulars. In the beginning sin was shown to be obnoxious by the fall and expulsion of Adam, the Deluge, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the giving of the law. Thus sin was shown to be obnoxious to divine law, but men would not believe it. At length God, by sending His own Son in our likeness to suffer for sin and for our sin, shows fully how God hates sin, and how abominable a thing sin is.

Jesus showed, moreover, how injurious sin is. Many ask, Why does God so condemn sin? It seems very pleasant sometimes. In the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, God shows just cause for sin's condemnation. He shows that sin, when finished, bringeth forth death. In the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, He shows how injurious a thing sin is, by letting sin run to its extreme, and showing in living contrast, perfect purity and holiness. Men speak of sin as a very little thing; but, in the marvellous exposition of holiness and purity in the person and character of the Lord Jesus, we see how vile a thing is sin. The action of the world towards sin, and its action towards

the holiness and purity of Jesus, show the totally injurious character of sin.

But, further, Jesus also proved sin to be preventable. True, He was "Very God of Very God," but we believe He lived His life on earth, His life of perfect lowliness, as man, by dependence on God. Thus He was made perfect through suffering, because the Author and Finisher of our faith and the Captain of our salvation. He lived His life not by His inherent Deity—though He was "God blessed for evermore"—but by the power of the Spirit and in dependence on the Father, as He himself again and again tells us.

But the Lord Jesus Christ not only condemns sin; He came to put it away, to be the Propitiation for our sins. Now what we want for this propitiation is what Job longed after. "Neither is there any Dayman betwixt us, that might lay His hand upon us both." It seems necessary that He who bore the sins of the world should be God as well as man. Indeed, this is vital, and I charge you to hold fast the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, or else you make shipwreck of your faith. Were it not so, what could we make of the statement, the substitutionary work of the Lord Jesus Christ? I have heard it said, "I cannot consent to go to heaven on the back of another man." Neither could I; no man can by any means offer a ransom for the soul of another. It is just here that the illustration you have often heard used, of Christ's substitution, breaks down. We are told of a boy who had done wrong, and was about to be punished, when an innocent boy took his place, and was punished in his stead. Now in any such case one feels the master committed an injustice; he had no right to punish an innocent boy. Do you think, if the very angel Gabriel, holy as he is, had offered himself for the sins of the world, it could have been justly accepted? No, it could not. What then? How could Christ justly take our place? Paul answers the question in 2 Cor. v. 19, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." He did not reconcile the world by means of punishing a third person, but by bearing the punishment Himself. If the school-master had punished himself and not an innocent boy for the guilty one, the justice of his action would be admitted at once. So it is here; God Himself bare our sins in His own human body, which He had voluntarily taken upon Him. While the humanity of Jesus made the substitutionary death possible, it is His Deity that gives it efficacy and justice.

But, according to Job, the Dayman must be one who can lay His hand on both parties. Here let us remember that, far back in the counsels of eternity, the Lamb was slain in the purpose of God. By virtue of the eternal covenant, He became the Lamb of God for me; before the creation of the world, He made Himself responsible for His creation. See how Paul brings these two things into juxtaposition in Col. i. 1: "In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature. For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him. And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." He, that is the Substitute, is the "image of the invisible

God," while He is also the "Firstborn of every creature." Thus He stands between God and man, laying His hand on both, becoming the Representative of God to men, and the Representative of men to God.

But it is urged, if Christ be the Representative of men, and if He has died for men, then all men are saved. There are two things necessary to complete the sequence—representation and identity. We have seen Him as our Representative. Suppose I send a man to the bank with a cheque; he goes as my substitute. If he has no authority to represent me, and go in my name to draw on my account, it is not just. But if I have given him authority to represent me at the bank, and to present a cheque in my name, it is just and legal. In giving him authorization to represent me I establish a certain identity between him and me. But supposing he draws the cheque for a certain agreed purpose, and turns the proceeds to some other purpose of his own, then it is evident the identity is not complete. He must have not only authority to represent me, but identity must be established. Now in this substitutionary work of the Lord Jesus Christ, He came to represent God and represent me. I must give him authority to represent me; in other words, I must accept Him as my Representative, and I must myself be identified with Him. If I take the pardon He has secured, I must use it as He would use it, I must be in harmony with Him, I must be identified with Him for the honour and glory of God. Until the representation and identity be established by faith, the propitiation with the Lord Jesus Christ has for us no application.

III. And, briefly, what are the results of this propitiation? One result is gratitude. Here it is that the religion of Jesus Christ differs from all other religions under the sun. Our religion recognizes we belong to God, who has redeemed us; and our service is that of glad and grateful hearts. The Hindu, by his observances, seeks to buy salvation; the Mohammedan, by his prayers and washings, seeks to buy salvation; the Roman Catholic, by his penances and masses, seeks to buy salvation; and many a Protestant, by punctual attendance at church and observance of a creed, seeks to buy salvation. But salvation has been bought for us, and we ourselves have been bought with a great price; and now, instead of seeking to buy salvation, we say, "Lord, what wouldst

Thou have me to do? Lord, I want to serve Thee joyfully, to render the rightful service Thou dost claim." This glad and grateful service is one of the results of propitiation, and the only one I can notice to-day.

The subject before us embraces not only the Lord Jesus Christ, the Propitiation for sin, but also the Lord Jesus Christ, the Righteousness of the believer. I have confined myself to the first point, for on that I was asked to speak. I would only remind you, in closing, that Jesus Christ is the Righteousness of the believer. There is a great difference between justification and pardon. The soul who accepts pardon through the Lord Jesus Christ has every sin removed, but still wants a character to stand in the presence-chamber of a holy God. This feature of a righteousness demanded is too often overlooked in preaching—at all events, it is not so fully preached as in days gone by. Hence many, not fully understanding the claims of God, are going about to establish a righteousness of their own. I have seen—perhaps especially in missions held here and there—pardon through the blood faithfully preached and brought home to souls by the Holy Spirit. But the righteousness is not preached, and after a little while these new-born Christians begin to realize their need of a character in which to stand before God. But they do not see it is provided for them in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and so they are led astray by one error after another. They begin to look on themselves as righteous, to think lightly of sin, to regard the term as merely applying to conscious sin, forgetting that sin is omission as well as commission. Thus they fancy they have obtained a character before God, and the result is immeasurable harm to their spiritual life. My brethren, not only has the death of Christ provided full pardon for our sins, but His perfect fulfilling of the law has provided a righteousness for us in which we may stand accepted before God. As Paul says, "Not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." In that righteousness we stand complete and accepted. As we sing in that old hymn:

"Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
My beauty is, my glorious dress;
'Midst flaming worlds, in this arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

ADDRESS AT THE AFTERNOON MEETING, KENSINGTON TOWN HALL, MARCH 16.

FUNDAMENTAL TRUTH IN ITS RELATION TO SPIRITUAL LIFE.

By the Rev. W. FULLER GOOD, Norwood.

God has been pleased to give to man a tripartite nature, which is, in 1 Thess. v. 23, set forth as "spirit, soul, and body," not body, soul, and spirit, as it is generally put, but in the true order of precedence; the spirit first, as man's highest element of being; the soul, or intellectual faculty, second; and the body, the material environment of both, last. The spiritual predominates in every case where the divine order is observed, and spiritual life is life in its highest and chiefest form. Apart from its possession, man is represented in Scripture as dead, "dead in trespasses and sins." The great distinction between the true

Church of God and the world, the saved and the unsaved, is found in this, that the former are quickened by the Holy Ghost into newness of life, are regenerated and have "passed from death unto life," while the latter abide in spiritual and judicial death. That which is instrumental, therefore, in producing spiritual life is, from every point of view, of deepest moment and of priceless value.

We can understand many regarding the meetings in which we are now engaged with a feeling of wonder not unmixed with disdain. They cannot see why doctrines such as those enunciated on our programme, and witnessed

to by those whose names are appended, should be deemed as of such immense importance, they would treat them merely as matters of creed and human theory, possessing no intrinsic worth—topics fit for theological discussion, and for scholarly research, but having no significance such as we are attaching to them when we speak of them as fundamental. We cannot too earnestly assert that, when we speak of fundamental truth, we do not mean truth which is essential to any particular party, creed, or form of Church government. There are truths which in their varied aspects are essential to them, and which have an importance of their own; but, however diversified the Christian Church may be in relation to these minor points of belief, this fact remains, in every separate organization spiritual life is manifest on the part of multitudes connected with it. That truth concerning differences between Episcopalian and Presbyterian, Baptist and Pseudo-Baptist, or any other branches of the one true Church, however important it may be in its own sphere, is not essential to spiritual life. There is, there can be, no monopoly of this; it is the common possession of all who are the true children of God; whatever may be their particular communion or Church connection, saints of God are found in every land, and in every Church of which Christ is the acknowledged Head. But all possessed of spiritual life meet, in reference to major points, on common ground; and even though it may not be that all pronounce the same "shibboleth," or cast their forms of expression in the same mould, yet all in heart set seal to truths which, affecting the salvation of the soul and its communion with God, are fundamental and supreme. For truths thus related to the inner being of the believer, touching the soul's deepest consciousness of need and yearning desire, we claim a vital position; they are as the Tree of Life, the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations, while all which contradicts or displaces them is as the deadly upas tree, which poisons and destroys whatever comes in contact with it. In dealing with our theme we would first remark:

1. That spiritual life is a fact which can only be accounted for and explained by the truths we call fundamental. That spiritual life as a distinct experience, and as a powerful factor in the history of mankind, is a fact, not a chimera or enthusiastic dream, is indubitably proved by the annals of the Christian Church from its commencement until now. Spite of all the defects and blots which mark the records of Christianity as developed in the character of its adherents, there remains as large a modicum of true sainthood and noblest triumph over the flesh and sin, as well as of deeds and impulses born not of man but of God, that it is impossible to deny the constant flow through all the ages of a stream which, traced to its earliest consciousness see Christian experience, finds expression in the words, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life that I now live in the flesh is a life of faith on the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." But such a life is only possible on certain conditions, and in the presence of certain facts; for instance, how can it be explained apart from the sacred Simp-

tures, which find one of their most powerful roots of divine origin and authority in the answer of man's heart and conscience to their revelations of sin and holiness, of salvation and of grace? Further, spiritual life is asserted in Scripture to be only possible where there is vital union with Christ: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." But here again we are confronted with the whole mystery of the incarnation, life, death, and resurrection of our Lord, the fact of spiritual life necessitating the whole. This is equally true of the work of the Holy Spirit; man has no power to quicken himself into spiritual life, nor can it be produced by aught but a power divine. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." If, therefore, it is possessed at all, it must have been begotten of the Holy Ghost, even as it is written, "Except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." You must, therefore, either accept spiritual life as a supernatural fact, or blot out the history of all the millions who have lived and died in the faith of Christ, rejoicing in the possession within themselves of that "well of water, springing up into everlasting life," thus giving the lie to the noble confession, not only of the glorious company of the apostles, the goodly fellowship of the prophets, and the noble army of the martyrs, but also of the holy Church throughout all the world.

2. We remark that spiritual life depends for its origin upon fundamental truth. Thus is its awakening within the soul accounted for. "Of His own will begat He us with the Word of truth." "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." That Word is said to be "the Word of Life," it is in its nature "quick and powerful," its "contents are lively oracles," they are "spirit and life." The whole Gospel record is written that we "might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, we might have life through His name." Spiritual life is ever preceded by conviction of sin, accompanied by faith in the redeeming work of Christ, and rejoices to acknowledge its indebtedness to the Holy Spirit for its origination and production in the heart. Formalism, intellectualism, asceticism, and pharisaic self-righteousness may exist without the truth, may boast independence of a supernatural power, deny depravity of heart, and reject atonement by blood, but spiritual life can never do this. As well might the child disown its parentage, the tree despise its roots, or effect be declared unconnected with cause.

3. We remark again that spiritual life is inseparable of development and sustenance apart from fundamental truth. We might appeal for proof of this to the sad decline of spiritual power which has accompanied and followed the present widespread decline in reference to Evangelical faith. Apostasy from the truth necessitates experimental as well as practical decay. The only point of contact between the soul and God is found in the risen Christ; if the spirit's hold on Him is loosened, the whole fabric of communion totters to its fall. Spiritual life is evidenced by a faith which

works by love; once let that faith be shaken, and truth become ignored or loosely held, and love grows cold, the fire within burns low, and smouldering embers, or at best a flickering flame is seen where aforetime the genial glow of spiritual fervour lit up and gladdened the soul.

Hence the force of our Lord's own words, "Abide in me, and I in you; as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me;" and again, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." The rule of spiritual progression is "as new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby." Neglect the study of the Scriptures, and spiritual life cannot develop—its most essential nutriment is lacking; think lightly of sin, or fail to confess and forsake it, and spiritual life must be fettered by its influence, and the soul overcome by its power; modify, reject, or doubt the salvation which is alone in Christ, whether in reference to His person, His propitiation, or His righteousness, and spiritual life will droop and wither as leaves in autumn, or as the physical frame by wasting disease; fail to honour the Holy Ghost as its Author and Sustainer, and spiritual life must languish, its heart will cease to beat, and the soul become dark and dismal as the shades of the dead. Of these transcendent truths we may truly say, "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit."

4. Spiritual life cannot answer its appointed end, or fill its sphere in the outer world, apart from fundamental truth. The purpose of God in the regeneration of a soul is not simply its own blessing and blessedness, but the advantage of others, the glory of the Divine Name in the fruit brought forth. "The mouth of the righteous is a well of life," "the fruit of the righteous is a tree of life," and "the law of the wise is a fountain of life." If we are quickened with Christ, it is that "we may walk in newness of life;" "the life of Jesus" is to be "manifested in us," we are to be "holding forth the Word of Life," and to be living epistles, "known and read of all men," "epistles of Christ," written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. But in order to this, it is essential that the truth dwell in us, that it be understood, believed, held fast, and loved by us; otherwise how shall we bear true testimony to our Lord, or lead others to His feet? "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" The words of the beloved John to Gaius emphasize this part of my theme: "I rejoiced greatly when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkedst in the truth; I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." God's way is "the way of truth;" spiritual life being begotten by the Spirit of Truth, can only be true to itself while it is rejoicing in the truth, bearing witness to the truth, and speaking the truth. The children of God are led by the Spirit of God; but as the Spirit of Truth, He guides into all truth; yes, "the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth." Our sanctification depends upon this, according to the

precept of our Lord, "Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy Word is truth." It needs not that we be theologians, subtle disputants, or skilled controversialists in order to fulfil the functions of our spiritual position as made alive in Christ, but it is a positive necessity that the truth of God be in us, His Word our guide, His salvation our joy, His Spirit our personal and abiding Presence. There shall be no lack of power if our feet are found in the way of the Divine testimonies; we shall walk at large while we keep God's precepts. In view of the deadening truth and power of to-day, we may well ask, is the Spirit of the Lord sanctified? are these His desires? "Do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?" The words of the ancient prophet come home to every one who pants for reviving of heart, and for power in service. "O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord." We can only fight victoriously while we wield the sword of the Spirit and the shield of faith.

5. Lastly, let us remark, spiritual life is dependent for its joy, its inspiring influences, on fundamental truth.

One who knew much in olden time of its power has said, "Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage." The angel of the Lord declared to the wondering shepherds on Bethlehem's plain that the annunciation of Christ was glad tidings of great joy; and is it not so that whenever the Gospel of the grace of God emits its power, there joy attends its course? But the joy comes from those truths which modern thought most obscures and disavours. Bunyan tells us that, when Christian came to the cross, he gave three leaps for joy, his burden fell from off his back, and he sang with a glad and merry heart. But modern thought would take the cross away, so far as it is the means of pardon, peace, and reconciliation to God. To cut the cross, the best and sweetest, grandest and most soul-inspiring, of our psalms and hymns would have to be re-written. Spiritual life exults as it sings—

"There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains."

It trembles with divinant emotions of gratitude and love as it chants—

"Nothing in my hands I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling;
Could my soul no rapture know,
Could my tears for ever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and Thou alone."

It triumphs with sacred joy and wonder as it declares—

"Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
Midst flaming worlds in robes arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

It shudders with solemn yet intense delight as it exalts forth again the glad refrain—

"Now, I have found the ground wherein
Sure my soul's anchor shall remain,
The wounds of Jesus for my sin,
Before the world's foundation slain,
Whose mercy shall unshaken stay
When heaven and earth have fled away."

It is when we feed in the green pastures of redeeming love, as they are spread out in the sacred Word, that we realize the blessedness of life in Christ, and "rejoice as one that findeth great spoil." The doctrines of the Gospel of God as opposed to the vain speculations and theorizings of men alone can furnish solace in the hour of need; by them we are lifted up from depression, grief, and gloom, and are animated to courage and hope in the conflicts of life. "We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." How then can we fail to testify and boldly advocate the grand truths for which we now contend, or view with unconcern and inaction the efforts made to despoil them of their fulness and divine authority? They are our life, and we would sooner die a thousand deaths than surrender one of them, or abandon the vantage-ground they afford.

Reject the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, and in their place accept the shifting forms of human thought; leave the place of

lowly confession, and exchange the spirit of contrition for that of self-righteous confidence in view of the vaunted dignity of man; regard the cross of Christ as a moral influence and an example of self-sacrifice rather than as a vicarious offering for sin, and a substitution of the just for the unjust; lower the divine person of our Lord to the level of a merely perfect man; lay aside the spotless robe of our Saviour's perfect righteousness for the filthy rags of our own doings; and instead of the communion of the Holy Ghost as that of a living personal Friend, substitute an influence or a negation,—never! Spiritual life needs it all, clings to it all, refuses to part with aught so vital to its own existence, and in lowliest dependence on the unseen might of the ever-present though invisible God, exclaims—

"Should all the forms that men devise
Assault my faith with treacherous art,
I'd call them vanity and lies,
And bind the Gospel to my heart."

THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN.

By the Rev. H. W. WHEB-PHELON, M.A., Vicar of St. Paul's, Ouslow Square.
(Address delivered at Kensington Town Hall on March 16.)

The subject entrusted to me as it appears on your syllabus is really broader than that I propose to undertake, the subject of "The Entrance of Sin into the World, its Extent and Consequences." But I may say that when I was first asked to speak, I decided to limit my remarks to the third branch of this great subject—viz., the consequences of sin, which is announced in the other part of our syllabus as "Everlasting Punishment." I do not propose to do more than simply remind you that according to the Word of God it is clearly stated that sin entered the world by the power of Satan working upon God's creatures, and that as it entered the world it brought with it as its consequence death, and that awful consequence spread in the spiritual sense through the whole race, and the circumstances or operations arising in this world; and the extent of these being universal, it is perfectly clear that if men have to be delivered from the effects of sin, there must be a universal provision, so that the sons of Adam may be placed in a position before God in which it is possible for God to be just and yet the justifier of those who have been ungodly. In some way or other, if men are to be delivered, some provision must be made for the guilty, some retribution must be administered; unless some satisfaction had been found, the guilty could not be admitted into His favour.

There is more in this subject than can be done justice to in a half-hour, or in many, many half-hours, and in approaching the subject of what we believe to be the final effects or consequence of sin, viz., "everlasting punishment," I need the sympathy of my hearers, perhaps, more than any of my brethren who will be called upon to speak on the far more delightful subjects of the mercy of God, and the love that has been shown in the person of Jesus Christ: the satisfaction of God in His Son, and the delights open to those who believe in Christ. As a humble believer in Him, then, I have to ask your attention to the solemn subject of the final consequences of sin,

as brought upon those for whom no real absolute salvation is provided—by their own determination, or by some of the effects which sin has produced. I will, therefore, call your attention to the 4th chapter of the First Epistle of Peter and the 17th verse, which really forms the inquiry on which your attention is now to be fixed: "What shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God?" Now I turn back to the 12th chapter of St. Luke, and read verses 58 and 59. "God is love," as our Scriptures tell us. The Mohammedans, we are told, when they enter a place where the Scriptures are being sold, and as they look at the truths placed before their eyes, turn to the colporteur and say, "That is a lie."

We should marvel if any openly dared amongst us to contravene such a statement, and yet it is this that is being declared on every hand among ourselves at this time. Men dare not treat it as the Mohammedans, and say that it is a lie when we affirm that "God is love;" and yet practically, among many of those who object to our Gospel there is the same declaration, either in practice or in affirmation, that God cannot be love, or that such statements as we find pronounced in God's Book cannot, indeed, be possible. One would think that after eighteen centuries it would not be needful for any man to stand forth and speak in justification of God.

One would have thought that the creature dependent on the Creator would have been absolutely sure of His goodness, the one great opportunity that seems to be laid on the minister to-day to clear God if possible, not by argument, for that would be human effort, but by the removal of all the pretences which have gathered around the utterances made concerning God's holy truth. If we endeavour to answer the solemn question of St. Peter, in the words of our Lord, we shall see at once that the passage is full of imagery, and if we attempt to explain the imagery I doubt not that we shall find the passage means some such idea as this: that we are in the way with our adversary, the law, and have to appear before

Almighty God, who is described as the Magistrate, and have to make our peace with Him lest we be brought before the Judge, who will deliver us to the officer, who will take us and cast us into prison. What can we take that prison as signifying but hell itself; and that, if once we be cast into that hell, we shall never come forth from there until we have paid the very last mite; which means, made actual atonement for and compensation for every sin we have ever committed since we have been in existence? Such, then, being the imagery, we may ask ourselves, what is the common idea and the common declaration concerning these things? The affirmation concerning the ordinary Evangelical preacher is that he will preach the Gospel of salvation as a free gift from God, limiting its provisions to an exceedingly few, and adding that the reason so few are saved is because so few are prepared to accept what is offered to them in Christ; hence but the few accepting Christ can possibly be saved, and that all outside this blessed provision which is made for the sinner are to be consigned hereafter, irrespective of their condition, irrespective of their age, irrespective of their life, and irrespective of their opportunity, to an everlasting condition of distress and anguish, which is only to be described as fire, mental remorse, and bitterness, and spiritually as "gnashing of teeth," with suffering such as no human being has ever dreamed of in this world, and which can only be pictured by piling up expressions of torture, physical, mental, and spiritual, through all the ages of eternity. Such is the declaration that is placed upon us as preachers of the Gospel. And then the challenge is that the God who assigns to such infinite torment cannot be described in any sense as a God of love. Our first answer is, is it so in the Word of God? With regard to the preaching of the great majority who profess to hold the Gospel of love for men in the Word of God, most distinctly we declare that not one sentence of such an awful creed as that is to be found in God's Word, nor do I know of a man claiming to be a preacher who would give utterance to such sentences as these as if they did come from God. We meet the declaration quoted, then, with a direct negative. We assume, the thought never sprang from men who knew the full, free Gospel of salvation as in our Lord Jesus Christ, that infants not baptized into the Church would be damned through all eternity. From that point forward Rome has developed the creed, going on to absolve or to deliver men from the perdition they had earned; and, as the Roman power increased, they found it to be an exceedingly paying process; they gladly accepted the creed which hurried to everlasting perdition all those who were not in the pale of the Church, and absolved by the priest, thus holding in their hands the keys of heaven and hell, they affirmed that they could not let any run loose unless some special provision were made for the absolution of the soul. Hence arose the idea of purgatory and the provision on behalf of the Roman priesthood, that he who would release his brother should pay sufficiently for the benefit. Men being sunk in darkness and ignorance, were required to believe that those not absolved by the priest were being frizzled and fried and placed in excruciating agonies. But the moment

the Reformation arose we have at once to recognize the glorious deliverance that appeared in a great measure from the dark bondage put forward by Rome. The first thing that came out was the glorious truth concerning God's provision in Christ Jesus; that as in Adam all died, from sin, so God in His infinite mercy and justice had made a provision equal to, if not in every sense exceeding, the sin in Adam; and thus there was an absolute provision made in Christ for the actually-committed sins, which had come by reason of the Fall. Therefore man began to see the fulness of the righteousness in Christ, and that God, determined to save mankind in its totality, had allowed Christ to become actual sin in its totality of meaning, and in the fulness of the word had allowed Him to be a curse for man (Gal. iii. 13). So that the curse passed over from us to Him (John iii. 14). Christ Jesus had become sin in its penalty, curse, and power on behalf of the human race, and this provision at once swept away all that awful feeling which had arisen concerning the harshness of God and His design to punish His creatures, simply because Adam had originally fallen. With this there came a still further manifestation of the perfect willingness of God to absolutely accept men as if they were in the position of Christ. Every one who will believe in God's dear Son, and exercise a simple faith, is so changed that in God's sight he can take the place of His Son and be made the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Like a glorious sun arising on the darkness of humanity, Luther began to preach the doctrine of justification.

In order that we may come forward step by step to the light, we find God gives us educational advantages as well as spiritual revelation. The consequence is that in this enlightened age, when men's minds have been so highly educated, they have revolted from it and refused to bow to the superstitions of their forefathers. And as a revolution of feeling, we have a literature widely spread, very reverent in some cases, exceedingly interesting in many cases, and no doubt frivolous in some cases, but on the whole deserving a great attention among thinking and reading people; and men are yearning for light concerning this subject. And when you turn to consider what has been the feeling on the part of those who have engaged in this study, you will find there are five different schools of thought, different from the "orthodox" (though God forbid that a certain class of teaching should be considered orthodox), and they turn into five different channels, in order to deliver themselves from the idea of a material hell.

The first we may describe as being that life in Christ which was put forward by a minister and devoted writer, not forty years ago, whose work has been revised, and sent out in 1877—it is the third and well-cared-for edition—in which we are taught that the true doctrine of Scripture is that known as "Conditional Immortality," that there is inherent in man no immortality, and that, when men do not receive Jesus as their Saviour, and become united to Him, they either depart from this world, or, after the punishment which God inflicts for a while, pass into a condition of annihilation, an absolute destruction of being for ever and ever for those who are not united to God's dear Son.

The second manifestation has been called "the Eternal or Larger Hope," in which we are led to think that the great majority of men, except the very few who have not been purified here, will pass into a purgatorial condition, in which the soul may be purified for ages, and at last be joined by the body, and that the purgatorial purging will end at last in the translation of these souls, nearly the whole of the race, into the glory of God, because the purging has done what the effect of salvation could not do. The writer of the work on this subject leaves us in considerable doubt as to what will happen concerning those who absolutely refuse God's mercy. He seems to have little hope, and leaves the point by admitting that almost certainly they will be sent to everlasting pain and suffering.

The third is the doctrine of Annihilation, absolute annihilation as soon as the soul passes from the body; that is to say, that, if not accepted in Christ Jesus, the moment it leaves the body it is as extinct as any animal that has ceased to exist in this world, and has never had a soul bestowed upon it.

The fourth is that which may be called the "Christadelphians," and it seems to differ little from the conditional immortality theory. The difference I find is that the Christadelphian deems it right and just to say that there must be punishment for the sins of man as committed here below, and that while any man passing from this earth ceases to exist absolutely because he is not united to Christ, yet from a sense of justice and because of his revelation God will recreate him and will then inflict punishment according to his guilt. I assure you I had this from the mouth of one of their leading people. Man is re-created on the ground that God's justice demands He should punish the man, and He must, therefore, so re-create him in order to bring upon him the due punishment or reward of his deeds, because God is just and holy!

Then there is one more, and that the most popular, "The restitution of all things." The writer speaks and declares that not only will all men who accept Christ on earth be translated, but that hereafter by some process which he hardly defines, like purgatory, those who have known the depths of depravity will be exalted again, including even Satan himself. In the day when that shall appear all creation will have been summed up in the perfect will of God.

Such, then, are the chief declarations of men who revolt from the old creed.

We must understand, finally, what is really found in God's Holy Word. In the first place, as I turn to it—and now I am dealing with the provision God has made for us in order that we should turn off God's so-called cruelty and want of consideration for His creatures—as I read the fifth chapter of Romans, and many others which correspond, I find that the provision of God being applied to the race, and the absolute righteousness of God in Christ, means His acceptance of all the whole human race. God has made such a provision that all might be saved. Now, more than half the human creation, as I have heard, die before they reach the age of five, and therefore if God's provision is perfect for all the human race, and God has put a righteousness to our credit which can only be taken away from us provided we knowingly and

consciously sin after the provision given us and refuse to take what God has provided for us, more than half the creation pass at once into the kingdom of God by virtue of their innocence and because they have not rejected Christ. At once we sweep away those that foul connection to God that He has poor unconscious babes who pass away into everlasting pain and death.

Secondly, we find that God never speaks of the heathen as if in any sense He meant to punish them except in proportion to their sinning against light. See Rom. II. Take all, and other passages, which show that punishments are proportionate in the very strictest sense of the word.

Thirdly, we have the undoubted truth that all who do believe will be found accepted and placed at God's right hand in glory, so that perfect provision is made for them.

Fourthly, having mentioned the infants, having spoken of the heathen and of the believers who do undoubtedly come into everlasting joy through Christ Jesus, we are left simply to deal with those who, having received the offer of salvation in some sense or other, according to the measure of their light and the revelation of God, have wilfully resisted and determinedly declined the offer of salvation made in Christ, and who, while the Gospel is preached at their very door, turn away from it and set their faces to evil. Of such men as these what can we say, what is to be said, after God has made provision and offered them that which is the highest token of His love, and after His having, in every sense, pleaded with them to be saved, reject and refuse His offers of mercy? It is not of God that any man is lost, or that any man should be outside the bounds of His grace and glory; but just in proportion to the determination in man to decline the offer must the punishment be administered hereafter. If men have refused the mercy of God, I cannot see how there can be in the world to come, if we deal with it on reasonable grounds, any hope for those who are placed in this position, but that they will have no opportunity of hearing the Gospel or listening to the words of God, and are simply abandoned to their own condition.

We come to the last word. If we turn to the pages and ask what God has revealed to us concerning punishment, we find two sets of expressions, both very solemn: one we speak of as death, and death is spoken of by men as if it meant annihilation. It never can mean annihilation; it may be a separation of parts, a separation of the spirit and body, a separation from those we love, a separation from any possession; and that is all that the term death can mean. And note that death is not spoken of as the punishment and the penalty, but as the consequence of sin. It is a fact that a child will be burnt if it puts its finger in the fire; but a mother may punish it for doing the act, afterwards. The child is burnt as the natural consequence; the child will be punished for its disobedience. Death is not the punishment God has inflicted upon sin, but the necessary consequence, and where there is sin there must be separation from God; and it is only as it can be removed by the removal of sin that there can be the bestowment of God's favour. This is offered in Christ Jesus our Lord, and "whosoever will may take the water of life freely;" thus penalty

and consequences are swept away in Christ, and no man is sent to everlasting death except those who wilfully reject the offers of God. Men should read their Scriptures in connection with the context, where you find God's judgment spoken of—Rev. xiv.—and read the two first chapters in *2nd Thess.*, in connection with the whole *Epistle*, and you will find such terms are reserved for those who refuse Christ and go forward in an anti-Christian spirit. There are ten different words meaning destruction; seven have no connection with the subjects before us, and the other three have.

Four terms are used in speaking of the state of the wicked, but not one means either annihilation or anything which we understand by destruction of properties; the cessation of existence is not involved in any of the words, but they mean deprivation and the removal of certain benefits which man had otherwise known. The word *lonkos*, which is the Greek disputed word, occurs seventy-one times in the New Testament, and in sixty-seven cases it is translated as everlasting or eternal, and kindred terms. We are taught by the author that this is a cruel mis-translation to say that it means eternal. I can only say that none have the right of eternal life. A hundred years ago we were taught, at least by writers of great power, that *Aion* takes its name from two Greek words, *ai* and *on*, meaning *ever-being*. We are justified in saying that where it applies to anything human which can exist throughout eternity, it must mean everlasting in the deepest sense of the word; where

we refer it to God or to the sin, it absolutely means a lengthened existence. I was taught by this leading Christadelphian that the word *Aion* was the only word used to express inherent immortality. Fifteen years ago I met with him, and now find that he says it is vain to talk of *Aion* as everlasting. "I thought," said he, "that you would have escaped from that long ago; the word for 'inherent' is *Aion*, kept for God's immortality, and absolute everlastingness in the deepest sense of the word."

Two days afterwards I was reading, accidentally, as men call it, the *Epistle of Jude*, and in the 6th verse I came to this, "Reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Words that seem to crush all hope out of any soul. One man stood face to face with me, a worldling, and said, "I have heard from a learned canon, a far greater man than you have in the Church of to-day, who said, 'If I had sinned ever so greatly, there is an eternal hope for me in the world to come,' and I tell you, if it means millions of years, I am willing to go into that damnation for the sake of enjoying my pleasures now, and I tell you the canon is bigger than you, and I mean to sin and take the consequence." Oh, my dear hearers, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel? Take heed, whilst thou art in the way. Believe God, and God's Son, who died to show that "God is love;" and remember that, if a man ever gets into that prison, he shall never come out until he has paid the very last mite.

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE PROPITIATION FOR SIN.

By the Rev. HENRY HATCHER, Congregational Church, Weston-super-Mare.

(Address delivered at Kensington Town Hall on March 16.)

The truth which has been entrusted to my setting forth, and which we confirm, is "that the death of the Lord Jesus Christ was a propitiation for the sins of men." This has been the doctrine of all the historical churches of Christendom, and of all denominations. That Christ died is a fact which has its place in secular history. We needed not inspired men and inspired documents to hand down the mere event to us. If the New Testament were lost or destroyed, this great occurrence would remain where we find it, in the classic literature of Rome; but that Christ died for sin is an assertion of a very different order—that, indeed, we owe exclusively to inspiration; that man died at all as a consequence of sin, is a doctrine of revelation. Without the Bible we could not tell why man died; we have no information on the point. All we learn from nature is that we are in a world of death. It is Scripture that shows that death is the natural consequence of sin; death is the penalty of transgression. We all know that our blessed Lord had no sin of His own to die for. The inspired men assert His sinlessness; a perfect life has been given to no one else, nor is it likely to be. The life of our Saviour is without a stain or speck. You would have pronounced that a literary and moral impossibility, for the men who handed this down to us were not literary experts, and they were at no pains to conceal their own defects. No, it is from the hands of an infallible inspiration; that Christ died in our stead is the truth we affirm to-night, by the ordinance of our Heavenly Father, and by His own choice.

The first recognition of our Saviour which we encounter in the New Testament is: "The Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world." He was so proclaimed by the forerunner. The only way a lamb could take away sin is by propitiation; the lamb was appointed to take away sin by bearing the penalty of sin in the place of the transgressor, and thus exercised an intermediate mystery between the Law and the Gospel. The evangelist has placed before us a most vivid scene, and St. Paul speaks of God's own self-radiation: "When God sent forth to be a propitiation through faith by His blood." To forgive sin, according to the inspired teaching, without propitiation would have been unrighteous in the ministry of God's love and holiness. We behold the sinless One suffer for the sinful. The Lord himself assures us that He came to give His life, the one life, a ransom for the many lives; and when He instituted the Holy Supper He declared that His own blood was shed for the remission of sins; and St. Peter says our Lord suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous. Our Lord's death was vicarious or substitutionary. The sin offering was taken away in order that man might be spared; He died that we might not die. There is no death to the Christian; the tears of the believer in Christ are without bitterness; death is bereft of its sting, and death is the moment of victory. "He that believeth on me shall never die."

We are not dealing with niceties of grammar, but with the realities of the divine record. The

reason so many refuse to believe in the Scriptures is that they do not like the doctrine, and they will not have it. They have taken up a position towards our Lord's redeeming sacrifice as though it were all a fallacy, and say that our Lord's death is an unrevealed and most portentous mystery.

That One who never sinned should suffer the last penalty of sin is, indeed, shocking, and we are led to ask, Where was God, and what becomes of His pledge that He who fulfils the law of righteousness shall live for ever on the reward? Even if our Lord did not die for our sins, what a discouragement is presented in His cross! The only One who ever lived up to God's standard, the only sinless One, was stricken down. Who would attempt to walk in the footsteps with this before him? But the terrible shadows all fly, as we listen to our own words of light; for it is written that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance should be published in His name unto all the nations. We have seen the place of our Lord's provision. You remember the Mount of Transfiguration, where heaven and earth mingled. There were Moses and Elijah; and our Lord was the complete fulfilment of all that Moses enacted, and of all that Elijah vindicated. What was the theme of converse on the mount? The decree He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. We feel constrained to accept St. Paul's definition, "That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." The place of our Lord's provision for sin is shown in the Holy Supper. What has the Church to show in this great institution for all the ages, and I mean show in the old English meaning of the word—i.e., publish, declare, proclaim? What is it to proclaim in this great memorial institution? It may be well for us, first of all, to remember what it has not to proclaim. Our Lord's incarnation to assume our nature, and to live our life, was a stupendous event, yet it is passed over in this great ordinance of our religion. The Church was not bidden to proclaim our Saviour's example. We shall never be able to estimate the value of the one spotless life. It stands forth, and will ever be proclaimed to the adoring ages. The Church is not bidden to show the teaching of Christ in the great memorial institute, what the words of Christ have done for man, what changes His speeches have wrought. It is not His parables that we set forth in the ordinance. It is not our blessed Lord's miracles. The mighty works of the Lord Jesus Christ are facts of immense importance. The supernatural is indispensable to the very essence, and to the authentication of Christianity, and yet we give them no expression in the ordinance we are to repeat

until the Saviour comes again. The Church is not bidden even to set forth the sufferings of His life in the great memorial institution. They were many. He was exposed to temptation, hunger, mockery, and desertion. Of His physical endurance we may say much, but none of these are brought back to us in the Supper. The Church does not even set forth the resurrection of our Lord, yet resurrection filled the mind of the Church, and it was the burden of early preaching, the crowning event of our Lord's incarnate life, and yet you have no recognition of it in the ordinance. Nor yet the ascension, yet it provided the assurance of His life and mission to the Church to all generations; it is simply assumed, it is not expressly denoted. And then there is the descent of the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost, the great gift of the unseen Christ demonstrating the life and activity of our Saviour in heaven; yet this has no place in the great memorial institution. The Church proclaims one truth: we have to show, to set forth, to publish the Lord's death. We come to live, the Lord came to die. We can achieve nothing but by life; our Lord's victory was won in death, and by means of death. The cradle and the tomb are the boundaries of our human career; our Saviour's were His birth and ascension. The death and the grave lay in the active course of our Lord's mission. He stands alone in the world's history in coming to die. We come to live. In the Book of the Revelation unseen things are unveiled to us. The prominent object in one of the visions is the Lamb, as though it had been slain. Our Lord is as prominent above as below; the saved ones have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. It is our own interest in the great propitiation, amongst other truths, that saves us. I confess, though I cannot say what may be the feelings of others here, that the bonds of denominationalism have not the strength of spiders' webs, except in so far as they are associated with the worship of the Redeemer, the acceptance of His Godhead, and faith in Him. It is only in Him that our prayers are offered until we form the perfect Church of heaven, where all our names are forgotten and divisions are unknown, where no sin shall ever come. Does all this seem far away from our strife? What seems so remote, so dim, so unreal, is nigh at hand; and there is an inconceivable glory ready to be revealed; and what appears to be only a tangled mass, a shoeny haze, are all systems of suns, and worlds on worlds are rolling in their splendour. It will be but a little while, and what now seems to be as unintelligible as the summer eclipse on the distant horizon will become to every one of us who trust Him a real and personal experience, the very vision and ecstasy of the eternal life in heaven.

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE BELIEVER.

By the Rev. H. SINCLAIR PATERSON, M.D., Presbyterian Church, Notting Hill.

(Address delivered at Kensington Town Hall on March 16.)

Fortunately, I can give my testimony in a very short period of time. I will not take more than fifteen minutes to-night, and in order to give practical proof of the absence of mere denominationalism concerning a subject like that of the righteousness of the saints, I will adopt the 11th Article of the Church of England: "We are accepted righteous before God only through the

merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not through our own works and deservings." I could not wish it better stated than in these few words; and indeed, when one looks at it, there are only two possibilities. We must either stand on our own merit, or on the merit of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Either we are saved by law or grace, by works

or faith, by a righteousness which is our own or by the righteousness of God. Either we keep the law, or God admits us into His presence and favour through the faith of the Lord Jesus. These are antithetic in the Scripture, and we have only to read with open eyes the Epistle to the Romans to discover that no man can stand before God for a single instant with any hope of acceptance as he is. Read the third chapter and take the description God gives of the human heart, a description none of us would give, and we even hesitate to accept it until we know God reads the heart and knows its secrets as we cannot know them. Read that indictment of human nature, in which it is declared that "our feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood; their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity." Take it as it stands, and it describes absolutely sinful human nature. In the best of us, even in the saints, that is what the heart is according to God's judgment; and therefore, if we are to enter into His presence and enjoy His favour, we must have another righteousness; and that you will find brought out as well. There is the human righteousness which is of the law, and there is that which is by faith in Jesus Christ. They are contrasted. The Apostle Paul shows how he rejoices to have this righteousness, and shows how he puts aside his own hopes, and how he trusts and depends absolutely and entirely on the finished life and obedience unto death of the Lord Jesus.

A man once came to the Lord Jesus, on whom looking, it is said He loved him, probably because of his extreme amiability and morality; and he asked this question: "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" and Jesus said, "If thou wouldst enter into life, keep the commandments." The Roman Catholic Catechism says the same thing to-day. What is the commandment? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind, and strength, and thy neighbour as thyself." "All these have I kept from my youth up." Did the man know what the law of God was? Had he the least conception of what it implied? Jesus shed a light on the whole matter, and dazzled his mind. Let us hope that he was brought back in humility to Christ before he died. "Go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor." That was law-keeping. He could not keep more than he gave to his neighbour. Which one of us will dare to say we do it? If we keep to ourselves, anything which our neighbour requires, we break the law. If he does not take up the cross daily and follow Christ, he breaks the law. Law-keeping indeed! We never can be saved on the basis of law-keeping. "There is none righteous; no, not one." The only One in whom righteousness is embodied is the Lord Jesus. If He had not lived here, God would never have been glorified by a perfect obedience on earth; and if the Lord Jesus Christ, the Law-giver, had not put Himself under His own law and fulfilled it, the creature's sin would never have been met, and righteousness would never have been attained. But the Lord taking to Himself a true body and a reasonable soul, fulfilled all righteousness and glorified God in doing so. And He did it; as the representative of man. The first man was our representative. Sin undeniably exists, and the only logical and scriptural explanation of its presence and continuance is to be found in the third chapter of the Book of Genesis. That is the only logical and scriptural explanation of the existence

of sin. The first man having sinned, all his posterity suffer the consequences, as the second came; and by His one obedience many are made righteous. The first man came and brought evil, and the second man came and wrought righteousness; on the ground of which each one of us may enter into the fulness of the favour of God, and know what it is to be accepted in the Beloved. The merits of Jesus: these can we plead, and these alone; for there is no other righteousness except that of God's own Son.

This is the sad thing—that the very people, to whom the law was given as a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ, stumbled over the stumbling-stone. From the ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans we learn "that the Gentiles who followed not after righteousness have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith; but Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained the law of righteousness," because they stumbled at this stumbling-stone. There is, however, the foundation laid in Zion, for in the tenth chapter of Romans we read that "Christ is the end of the law to every one that believeth." Ah! it is a blessed thing to know that we have given to us in the Lord Jesus Christ something far better than Adam had when he fell in Eden. Adam had innocence, and was created upright; but he lost it all and brought in sin and death. But in the Lord Jesus we have the righteousness of God. Have you ever thought of what that means? "God made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." Did you ever think of what the merit of Christ implies? There is nothing that merit cannot claim. If we are in union with Christ, we do not know our wealth. Why, there is nothing we cannot get if we come to God through Christ. "He who spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things?"

Indeed, there can be no obedience rendered by us until we come under the full sway and blessing of this meritoriousness of Jesus. We must be sustained and strengthened against temptation by the love of Christ, for we thus judge that if One died for all, then all died, and He died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for us and rose again. We cannot have grace to serve God aright except we have direct access to God, our Father in heaven, and claim His daily aid as part of the promise. This claim we make when we say, "For Jesus' sake." No one whose prayer concludes with these words, "For Jesus' sake," can possibly refuse to acknowledge that the merit of Christ is our one plea, even His righteousness made perfect in His obedience unto death. Surely, and always, we acknowledge the power of this plea when we accept Him as the Lord our righteousness.

I conclude as I began, by saying there are two ways: the one by man's work and man's merit—this is old as the days of Cain; and there is the second, by God's merit, the work and worthiness of God's Son. Thus, and thus only, do we pass through the rent veil into the holiest of all. Not by our own doings and deserving, as Rationalists pretend, or partly by those and partly by the merits of Christ, as Ritualists and Romanists claim, but by Christ's merit only and altogether do we enter into fellowship with God.

PROCEEDINGS OF COUNCIL.

The monthly meeting of Council was held on Thursday, March 8; the Treasurer presiding.

The Chairman read a passage of Scripture, and stated that it was proposed by the Special Committee to devote the first half-hour of this meeting to earnest prayer for God's blessing upon the approaching series of meetings for testimony regarding fundamental truth.

The following then led in prayer, the Chairman reading brief passages of Scripture at intervals: The Revs. H. E. Brooke, J. Douglas, W. Fuller Gooch, Dr. Paterson, and Messrs. Hodder and Matheson.

NEW MEMBERS.

The following persons were unanimously admitted to membership:—

Lieut.-Colonel F. W. Major, Baywater.
Madame Soares, Kensington.
G. Code, Esq., Notting Hill.
Mrs. Code, Notting Hill.
Madame Leite Rogers, Kensington.
C. Russell Harditch, Esq., St. John's Wood.
Captain E. R. Kenyon, Gillingham.
Miss Hamilton, Notting Hill.
Mrs. E. D. Shaw, Wolverhampton.
Ernest E. Shaw, Wolverhampton.
Thomas Bantock, Esq., Wolverhampton.
Mrs. Bantock, Wolverhampton.
Rev. F. Alston, Wolverhampton.
Rev. S. C. Adam, Wolverhampton.
Rev. T. M. Prentice, Wolverhampton.
Rev. C. L. Williams, Wolverhampton.
Rev. Wm. Johnston, Wolverhampton.
Mrs. Johnston, Wolverhampton.
Rev. Nathan Haigh, Wolverhampton.
Mrs. Haigh, Wolverhampton.
Mrs. Edridge, Wolverhampton.
Miss Edridge, Wolverhampton.
Miss Emily Edridge, Wolverhampton.
Mrs. Robt. Gardner, Wolverhampton.

Miss Shaw, Wolverhampton.
Miss Hicklin, Wolverhampton.
Dr. Collis, Wolverhampton.
Mrs. Collis, Wolverhampton.
Mrs. Alfred Pengelly, Wolverhampton.
Rev. W. Boothby, Wolverhampton.
Rev. E. J. Church, Wolverhampton.
Mrs. Dumbell, Wolverhampton.
Rev. W. Pearson, Stoke-on-Trent.
Rev. Thos. Cooper, Stoke-on-Trent.
W. M. Gross, Esq., Stoke-on-Trent.
J. Tailwright, Esq., Stoke-on-Trent.
R. A. Leadrum, Esq., Aberdeen.
Pastor Douéry, Var, France.
G. E. Caser, Esq., London.
Rev. J. Palfrey Thompson, North Row.
G. Charlton, Esq., London.

DEPUTATION WORK.

The Secretary reported on behalf of General Field, who was absent on deputation work, that he had attended a drawing-room meeting at Colonel Elphinstone's.

Mr. Arnold reported that he had, since last Council meeting, visited Wolverhampton and Stoke, where a drawing-room and public meeting respectively were held on behalf of the Alliance.

SPECIAL TESTIMONY MEETINGS.

The Secretary reported arrangements made for the forthcoming Testimony meetings, and laid upon the table copies of the final edition of the programme.

MAY CONVERSATIONS.

The Secretary reported that the Rev. Principal Angus and Mrs. Angus had again kindly placed the rooms of Regent's Park College at the service of the Alliance for the May Conversations. The Council expressed their gratitude, and Tuesday, May 15, was fixed for the meeting.

DEPUTATION WORK.

On February 24, by the kindness of Colonel and Mrs. Elphinstone, a drawing-room meeting was held at their residence in Notting Hill, and the Rev. Dr. Sinclair Paterson presided. Many friends were present, and the address given by General Field on the principles and work of the Evangelical Alliance was much appreciated. The Chairman expressed his warm sympathy in the Alliance, and as a member of the Council he commended it to the support of all. At the close of the meeting a few friends came forward and expressed their desire to become members.

On March 7 and 8, General Field gave addresses at drawing-room meetings at Ram-

gate and Canterbury. Mr. W. G. Habershon and Mrs. Mackay had most kindly sent out invitations, and a large number of friends, many of them being members of the Alliance, met the deputation at The Elms House, Ramsgate. The Vicar of the parish presided, and introduced General Field as an old friend whom they were glad to welcome again amongst them. The recent work in which the Evangelical Alliance has been engaged during the past two years was chiefly dwelt upon in the address, but a sketch of the history of the association during the more than forty years of its existence was given for the information of strangers. The report thus given of the program

of the work was felt to be most encouraging.

The Dean of Canterbury, a Vice-President of the Evangelical Alliance, presided at the drawing-room meeting kindly given by Mr. and Mrs. Goodhart, at Canterbury, on the afternoon of March 8. The majority of the friends present not having previously heard any account of the extent and operations of the Alliance, the address embraced the whole period of its existence; the international character, as well as the principles and objects, were clearly explained; the universal Week of Prayer, efforts on behalf of religious liberty, and many other departments of work, were opened out and expatiated upon by the deputation. Much warm interest was manifested, and a vote of thanks given to the Chairman and to General Field.

Mr. Arnold addressed a drawing-room meeting, kindly convened by Mrs. Whelpton at her residence in Kensington, on Jan. 27th, when the statement of the principles and the world-wide work of the Alliance elicited many warm expressions of sympathy and interest. Several of those present afterwards gave their names for enrolment as members.

On the 30th and 31st of January, Mr. Arnold visited Wincanton and Street, in Somersetshire, where public meetings were held with a view to make known the objects and the operations of the Evangelical Alliance. Although the attendance in each case was somewhat limited, owing to snowstorms which prevailed at the time, much interest was awakened by the addresses given.

On Feb. 3, Mrs. Bretherton, of Tunbridge Wells, gathered a large number of Christian ladies and gentlemen in her drawing-room to hear an address on the work of the Alliance. The Rev. J. Hume Townsend presided, and expressed his cordial approval of the principles of the society. The address of the Secretary was listened to with earnest attention, and at the close Mr. Arnold had the pleasure of receiving a number of names of those who desired to be enrolled in the membership of the Alliance.

On Feb. 9, Mr. Arnold visited Wolverhampton, where Mrs. E. D. Shaw had kindly convened a drawing-room meeting at her residence (Oaklands). There was a large gathering, including ten of the clergy and ministers of the town. The chair was occupied by the Rev. F. F. Gough, who had long been warmly interested in the Alliance, and through whose efforts the meeting had been arranged. This was the first occasion for very many years that a meeting for the Alliance had been held in the town. Mr. Arnold's address entered fully into the aims and objects of the society, and he then gave an account of the various departments of the work, showing what blessing had followed the observance of the universal Week of Prayer, especially in the mission field, and also how greatly God had prospered the efforts of the Alliance on behalf of the persecuted in many lands. At the close of the address warm expressions of thanks were given to the Secretary, and a strong desire was evinced for some permanent organization in the town. Mr. Arnold was also invited to visit Wolverhampton again in the early autumn for the purpose of addressing a public meeting, as it was thought desirable to make more widely known among the members of the various evangelical churches the great work accomplished by the Alliance. Many of those present afterwards testified in a practical way their interest in the proceedings by becoming subscribers to the funds.

On February 10, Mr. Arnold addressed a public meeting at Stoke, which had been convened by the Rev. Sam Hirst.

The Secretary visited Hanley on March 9, where the Rev. J. Bateman had arranged for a drawing-room meeting kindly given by Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Moore at Caudon House. There was a good attendance of Christian ladies and gentlemen, including many ministers; and at the close of the Secretary's address, which elicited repeated expressions of sympathy and interest, several of those present gave their names for enrolment as members of the Alliance.

BELFAST

The annual meeting of this branch was held on Saturday, March 17, and immediately afterwards a special prayer meeting in connexion with the Day of Prayer for Ireland. W. L. Finlay, Esq., J.P., presided. The attendance at the meeting was encouraging, and the spirit excellent.

The Rev. John Spence, M.A., in addressing

BRANCH.

the meeting, referred to St. Patrick as a man of distinguished piety, intense prayerfulness, and entire consecration to the service of his beloved Lord in his work of evangelism.

The Rev. John E. Green urged his hearers to pray, live, and labour not only for our Roman Catholic fellow countrymen, but also for the unconverted Protestants around us.

